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FLOWERS FROM MANY LANDS:

A Christian Companion

FOR

HOURS OF RECREATION.



LONDON :
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY ;
DEPOSITORIES, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW, 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,
AND 164, PICCADILLY ;
AND SOLD BY THE BOOKSELLERS.

LONDON :
CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.

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ENGLISH FLOWERS.

THE forms, colours, and odours of flowers, awaken the most agreeable sensations in the minds of youth and age. While the peasant's child finds a delight in those that blossom in the cottage garden, they prove a study and a recreation to the most profound philosopher. Poets in every age, and in every clime, have sung their praise in sweetest lines; and lessons of instruction have been suggested from the simplest buds that adorn the valley or the mountain-side.

“Flowers! to me thou art more beautiful
In thy most simple forms, than all that man
Hath made, with all his genius, and his power
Of combination: for he cannot raise
One structure, pinnacled, or domed, or gemm'd,
By architectural rule, or cunning hand,
Like to the smallest plant, or flower, or leaf,
Which living hath a tongue, that doth discourse
Most eloquent of HIM, the great Creator
Of all living things.”

Were the flowers of the world to be taken away, they would leave a blank in creation. Imagination cannot suggest a substitute for them. Whether they flourish in the garden, or bloom in the greenhouse; whether they are scattered in our pathway, sprinkled

ENGLISH FLOWERS.

on the verdant banks, or widely strown over the hills and vales, they never fail to please; they fill the air with their sweetness; and delight the eye with their exquisite beauty.

Our British flora is very extensive; though many of those now naturalized were brought from other lands. The engraving presents a bouquet of popular English flowers. The CARNATION, or Clove, which, though probably unknown to the ancients in its cultivated state, has been for many ages in the highest favour in Europe for its spicy fragrance. More than four hundred varieties have received distinctive names, and are arranged in three classes, as Flakes, Bizarres, and Picotées, according to the nature and arrangement of their colours. Allied to this flower is the PINK, a native of the British isles. The TULIP presents a great diversity of tints, and claims attention for its flaunting beauty. In contrast with this, is the lowly LILY OF THE VALLEY, or May Lily, admired alike for its delicacy and sweetness, and its glossy green leaves, enfolding the modest flower. The GERANIUM derives its name from a Greek word signifying "a crane," as there is a fancied resemblance in its carpels, or fruit, to the beak of that bird. Different species are indigenous to this country. But in our English nosegay, the Rose preeminently claims the title of "the queen of flowers." Its name is traced to an old Celtic word, *rhodd*, or red. At all times it has been the emblem of youth, beauty, and pleasure; but its fading loveliness, makes it also a fitting symbol of their transient nature. While it charms our eye, its frailty incites to serious reflection. As we gaze on a withered rose, the salutary remembrance is awakened,

"As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof knoweth it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." Psalm ciii.
15—17.

"How much of memory dwells amidst thy bloom,
Rose! ever wearing beauty for thy bower.
The bridal-day—the festival—the tomb—
Thou hast thy part in each, thou stateliest flower.

"Therefore with thy soft breath come floating by
A thousand images of love and grief,
Dreams, filled with tokens of mortality,
Deep thoughts of all things beautiful and brief."

C.

ALICE BECKFORD; OR, WORK FOR ALL.

"Go work to-day in my vineyard."—Matt. xxi. 28.

"Help us to help each other, Lord—
Each other's burden bear,
Let each his loving aid afford
To soothe his brother's care.
Help us to build each other up,
Help us ourselves to prove,
Increase our faith, confirm our hope,
And perfect us in love."

"BUT, Gertrude, how can people do good without means? the thing is absolutely impossible."

"I think, Alice, very much depends on what is understood by the word 'means,' it includes so many things."

"Well, money in the first place of course; time in the second—"

"And inclination in the third, I suppose," said Gertrude smiling.

"No, not inclination, Gertrude; say opportunity: many possess the inclination to do good who have not the opportunity. I, for example; how differently I am placed to you!"

"Yes, dear, you are," said Gertrude; "your lot would be considered by most people to be a much happier one than mine. You are much blessed, dear

"Am I? then I am sure I ought to be looked upon as a sort of curiosity," said Gertrude, laughing; "for governesses are not generally considered a very independent race of beings."

"Perhaps not generally," said Alice; "but you are much favoured in this respect, living as you do in this pretty cottage, with nothing in the world to think of when your duties are over; and your salary, Gertrude, you must excuse me if I say that it is a very handsome one."

"I quite acknowledge these advantages, dear Alice, and am sure that I can never feel sufficiently grateful for them, but you are mistaken in thinking that I can have nothing to do or to think of when my duties are over, for such is by no means the case; but I was not speaking of myself, we were talking about—"

"I know you were not speaking of yourself," interrupted Alice, "you never do if you can help it; you were trying to persuade me that it was possible to do good without means."

"No, not without means, you misunderstood me; I said that I did not think there was any one in the world who did not possess, or who might not make

some means, however small, and that it was the duty of us all earnestly to endeavour to improve those means."

"It may be so," said Alice ; "but, Gertrude, you do not mean to say that people can make either time or money ?"

"No, but they can economize both," replied Gertrude ; "and, dear Alice, is there not much sorrow in the world which we might help to soothe, much ignorance which we might help to enlighten, if in ever so small a degree, without money at all, supposing that our supply of it be actually as scanty as we imagine ?"

Alice did not reply, an unpleasant recollection crossed her mind at the moment of two full hours which she had that very morning spent upon arranging, dis-arranging, and re-arranging some flowers which she had intended to wear in her hair at a concert the next evening ; and how, having at length become perfectly disgusted with them, she was now on her way to the milliner's to purchase a new wreath. Gertrude, ignorant of her thoughts, but remarking her silence, went on,—

"What I mean is, Alice, that we often—at least I know it to have been frequently the case with myself—spend many sixpences and shillings on useless things, and thoughtlessly waste a great many moments which might be employed profitably either to ourselves or others, besides spending much more time upon trivial things than there is any necessity for."

"I think you are right, Gertrude," said Alice taking out her watch; and she half made up her mind that the old flowers should be worn. "But dear me," she exclaimed, "it is half-past twelve, and I have to go to Miss Springfield's to buy a cap for mamma, and be back

to lunch ; good day, dear Gertrude ; how I wish you would treat yourself to the concert to-morrow ! I should enjoy it twice as much if you were there ; do, will you ? the music will be so exquisite."

"I have no doubt that I should enjoy it very much, dear Alice, but I cannot go, so you must not tempt me again," replied Gertrude.

Alice went away, but in a few minutes returned almost out of breath, exclaiming, "Oh, Gertrude, I knew there was something else I had to say. You told me the other day that you wanted a new spring bonnet. I saw one at Miss Springfield's yesterday which would suit you exactly, neat, and beautiful and good ; I do wish you would have it, it is fine rice straw trimmed with white ribbon and violets ; if you like I can order it up for you to look at."

"Thank you for coming back to tell me, but I bought a straw yesterday which I shall trim myself, and which I think will suit my purpose very well," said Gertrude. "Besides, the one you speak of would be too expensive for me, I fear."

"It is only twenty-four shillings ; you do not call that dear, do you, Gertrude ? "

"Not to any one who can afford it, but I cannot at present, dear Alice."

"Well really, Gertrude, I do think you are growing quite mean and stingy ; I would not have taken the trouble to come back, only I thought you would be so pleased to have it ;" and in a half pettish mood Alice once more departed without seeing the tears with which her words had caused Gertrude's eyes to fill.

"Yes," said she to herself as she again saw the

pretty bonnet standing in the glass case at the end of Miss Springfield's shop, "Gertrude certainly is very stingy. I should like to resemble her in some things, but certainly not in stinginess. What is the use of her having so much money from lady E. when she has not the heart to spend a penny of it? She might just as well have that bonnet and a ticket for the concert too;

"Dear Alice," murmured Gertrude, as she stood at the window, watching Alice along the road, "she is a kind, warm-hearted girl; what a pity it is that her mind is so incessantly taken up with trifles! I am sure that in her heart she often has aspirations after higher and better things, and would be very different if she had only some one to guide her in the right way. At present she seems entirely influenced by those with whom she comes most in contact. Oh, if I had but one of those strong, powerful minds, like dear Roland's, which seem capable almost instinctively of inclining others to the right path, how I would then try to lead Alice! I am sure there is good enough in her richly to

reward the trouble of drawing it out." Gertrude Colton was too lowly-minded to think that the soft and beautiful influence of her own daily example was already silently beginning to effect that which precept alone, however excellent and forcible, might perhaps have failed to accomplish.

"What do you think of asking Miss Staples, or Miss Beckford?" suggested another lady.

"I have spoken to Miss Staples," was the reply; "but she is going to spend the summer with a sister in Westmoreland: Miss Beckford, you know, declines everything on the plea of having no time; Mrs. Hartley," continued the lady, raising her voice so as to attract the attention of a deaf lady who was seated near, "cannot you think of any one who would become secretary to the visiting and clothing societies? Mrs. Gray is, you

know, on the point of leaving the village, and we cannot hear of a lady who will undertake to supply her place."

"Have you asked Miss Colton?" inquired Mrs. Hartley.

"Miss Colton, dear no! how very odd that I should have forgotten her. I have no doubt she will take it, if she can, she is always ready to help; I will call to-morrow and ask her."

"Who is Miss Colton?" said a lady who had only resided a few months in the village, "I have never heard of her."

"She is governess to lady E.'s children," was the reply; "and a most estimable girl; her father was an old college friend of my husband's, he died very suddenly. During his life their income had been tolerable, but at his death the greater part of it ceased. Roland, the eldest son, had but half completed his college studies, and it was at once evident that he must either relinquish them or take part of the remaining principal from which his mother would derive her little income, to meet the necessary expenses. He had, I believe, from his very childhood the greatest desire to become a minister of the gospel. The struggle between duty and inclination was a hard one; but he at once decided, for the present at least, until some other path should be opened for him, to seek some employment by which he might be enabled to assist his mother and also help to educate his two younger brothers. His sister Gertrude was the only one who knew what this resolution cost him, and she nobly resolved if possible to prevent the sacrifice by her own exertions. Without saying a word to any one, she wrote

to me on the subject. Lady E. happened just then to be in want of a governess, and at my recommendation, for I knew the qualities of her heart to be quite equal to her intellectual attainments, gladly consented to take her. Yes, Gertrude Colton is a sweet, amiable girl, so thoroughly humble-minded and unselfish; I only wish there were more like her in the world. You would not believe, Mrs. Hartley, although she has so little time to herself, the many little acts of kindness she does among the poor; it was only yesterday that I found out that she goes every Saturday afternoon all the way to Crook's End on purpose to read to old blind Nancy; the tears ran down the poor old woman's cheeks as she talked about her."

"She must be a very amiable girl," said another speaker; "I suppose the E.'s pay her very well."

"They give her a hundred a-year, and she lives, as their former governess did, at that pretty white cottage in the Park which sir John built for the old housekeeper who died. The dairy joins the cottage, and the person who has the care of it, a widow I think, likewise attends upon Gertrude; this arrangement makes her much more independent than she could possibly be if she resided at the Hall."

"But I suppose she will give up her pupils when her brother takes orders," said Mrs. Hartley.

"Oh no, he was ordained two years since, and now has a curacy about ten miles from here. Gertrude, however, intends retaining her pupils until he obtains something better, which may enable him to assist in the education of the two younger boys. Sir John has, I understand, promised him a small living in his gift on the death of

the present incumbent, who is very old. At present I know that Gertrude, although she has never told me so, is saving all she can for that purpose."

Alice felt the blood rush to her temples as she listened almost breathlessly to this conversation, nor was it till it took a different turn that she recollects it was not intended for her, and moved to another part of the room. This then was the secret of what she had designated as Gertrude's stingy ways. How truly noble did Gertrude now appear! how mean and selfish,

her music, and commencing every new kind of fancy work that came out; she read too a good deal, novels principally, not because she liked them particularly, for there was a sameness and monotony about them which often wearied her, but because she thought it seemed stupid if she went out and heard the last new one talked of, for *her* to know nothing about it. Once or twice after leaving school, she had taken a grand fit of improving herself,—had determined to read history and learn German,—but each time the resolution had passed away either in a concert, a flower-show, or an evening party. And so it was that, from day to day, from year to year, she went on, leading the same life of busy

idleness, doing no good either to herself or to those around her ; yet, as Gertrude often thought, there were within her the germs of great and good qualities which only needed the uprooting of the weeds by which they were choked, and the Divine breath of the Holy Spirit to cause them to spring up, blossom, and bring forth abundantly. For a long time there were no stirrings within ; she would have been astonished at the thought

stood, was the commencement of her acquaintance with Gertrude Colton. She had too much penetration not to perceive at once how superior Gertrude was to herself, not only in point of intellectual culture, but also in the principles by which her conduct was guided, and which were the mainspring of her actions. She wished she could be like her ; sometimes she even went so far as to think that she would endeavour to become so ; but how could she ? Gertrude was differently placed to her, very differently ; besides, *she* liked visiting the poor, and reading to them, and working for them, while to her it would be the most distasteful occupation in the world. Besides, she had home duties to perform ; it could not be right for people to neglect their homes : and with

these arguments the matter was dismissed until some fresh circumstance once more aroused the same feelings.

Saturday was Gertrude's leisure day. One Saturday afternoon, Alice, who had not been very well for a week or two, agreed for the sake of the walk to accompany her to Crook's End, when she went to see the blind widow, Gertrude remarking that if she did not like to remain in the cottage during the reading, she might walk about the lane for half-an-hour, and she would then rejoin her. Alice, however, preferred remaining in the cottage, and when she saw the bright smile which spread over the wrinkled and sightless countenance of poor Sally, as soon as she became sensible of Gertrude's presence, and heard the fervent "God bless you, Miss Colton, dear! it's a real comfort to hear you read those precious words," which fell from her lips as she almost reverently took Gertrude's offered hand between her own at their departure, she thought that after all there might perhaps be some pleasure in trying to do good.

"How fond that old woman seems of you, Gertrude!" said she as they turned from the cottage, "it must be a pleasure to you to go and see her."

"It is indeed; but you must not think, Alice, that all visits paid to the poor are equally pleasant; there are very few cottages so neat and clean as poor Sally's, and still fewer of their inmates so grateful and contented as she."

They walked on for some little distance in silence; at length Alice broke it by saying abruptly, "Gertrude, what do you think of good works?"

"Dear Alice, what a strange question; I hardly know how to answer it."

"I mean, do you really think they are necessary; that God is not pleased with us unless we do them?"

"I am quite sure that good works can never save us," said Gertrude; "if that is what you mean, Alice; but yet I think it the duty of us all, to try and do as much good as we can; the barren fig-tree, you know, was doomed to be cut down because it bore no fruit."

"Well, I do think it a most difficult subject," said Alice, "I cannot understand why some preachers preach so much about faith, telling us that the Bible says we can be saved by that alone, and yet at the same time insist so much upon the efficacy of good works."

"Not the efficacy, dear Alice; the necessity, is it not? At one time it certainly appeared to me, as you say, rather a difficult subject; my ideas upon it are now clear, but somehow I do not seem as if I could convey them properly to you;" and once more Gertrude wished within herself that she had the tongue of a ready speaker. When they reached the Park gates, it was near five o'clock.

"You have not dined, of course," said Gertrude to Alice, "or I should have asked you to come in, and out of compassion to take tea with me. Do come some day, Alice, when you dine early, it would be such a pleasure to me, for I have not much society, as you know."

"Well, I happen to have dined early this very day," said Alice, "so, if you will have me, there cannot be a better opportunity than the present; papa and mamma are both out, so there will be no one to expect me at home."

"How delightful!" said Gertrude joyfully, "it will

be quite a treat to my solitary cup to see a companion by its side, for it scarcely ever has one, except when my little pupils come; Mrs. Burns will be in a perfect fluster when she hears that I am going to have a tea-party of one."

The two girls chatted merrily and pleasantly over their tea. When it was cleared away, Gertrude said, "Now, Alice, you must allow me to get out my work, I have some which I must finish this evening."

"Why, Gertrude, what are you making?" exclaimed Alice, commencing a thorough rummage of her friend's work basket; "pinafores, and two little frocks, I declare; for whom are they intended?"

"You don't know, then," said Gertrude smiling, "of the two twin girls—the two prettiest little creatures you ever saw—belonging to a niece of Mrs. Burns. Poor woman, she and her husband only came into the place a few weeks ago, so no one has thought to give them anything; Mrs. Burns came a day or two ago in the greatest distress, saying that there was but one frock for the two babies. I couldn't help laughing, but I did not like to go to lady E., I am so often begging of her; so I hunted out an old white dress, out of which I have been able to contrive a frock for each; has it not answered the purpose very well?"

"How wicked it was of me to call you stingy, Gertrude," said Alice; "do you remember it?"

"I never remember disagreeable things, if I can help it."

"It seems a shame for me to sit here in idleness," said Alice, as she watched the rapid movements of

Gertrude's fingers; "have you no knitting or crochet in hand that I could do for you?"

"No; I seldom have time for crochet now," said Gertrude; "but if you would not mind hemming this little frill for me, it would help me a good deal."

Alice willingly lent her aid, and in less than half-an-hour the frocks were completed, and Mrs. Burns was called in to convey them to their destination. Alice had a feeling in her heart almost akin to envy, when she heard Mrs. Burns's homely, but warm-hearted thanks, as she expatiated upon the treasure which Miss Colton's present would be to her poor niece. "But there, it be just like her, Miss," said the good woman, turning to her, "Miss Colton be always doing a kind turn for some poor body or other,—it's the air she breathes like."

"What shall we find to amuse ourselves with now?" said Gertrude, when the work-basket was dismissed.

"You said you would teach me that beautiful air which I heard you play one evening," said Alice.

"I shall be delighted," said Gertrude; "will you take your lesson this evening?"

Alice having signified her assent, Gertrude proceeded to arrange the music-book on the piano, and was about to commence her instructions, when a shadow indicated that some one was passing the window near which they sat; she raised her eyes, and starting from her seat, overthrew the music; "It is Roland," she exclaimed; "my brother!" and before he could knock she was in his arms at the door.

Alice did not see the meeting, but she observed the bright tears which glistened in Gertrude's eyes as she introduced her brother. For some reason undefined even to herself, Alice, ever since she had first heard of this brother of Gertrude's, had had a sort of horror of meeting him. Gertrude had always spoken of him as though she considered him quite a superior sort of being to other people, and seemed to set so high a value upon his judgment and opinion on almost every subject, that she had more than once said to herself, "Well, if he is so superior to Gertrude, I wonder what he must be to me; I hope I shall never see him."

Her first glance at Mr. Colton did not much contribute towards removing this impression. She thought she had never seen a more intellectual countenance, combined with that peculiar expression of deep and serious thought which gives one the impression of a mind and heart thoroughly imbued and in earnest with the subject by which they are engrossed. "He does not look as if he could ever smile," thought Alice.

But he did smile nevertheless, smiled upon Gertrude; and then Alice thought that she had never seen a countenance so transformed before, so radiant and benevolent did it become. As the smile passed away, his quiet eye seemed to rest upon his sister with an expression of satisfaction and affection, which she could hardly have understood had she not known the ties of gratitude by which he was bound to her, and the reasons he had for loving her as he did. After some little conversation, Mr. Colton stated that he had made arrangements which enabled him to come over and spend the day with Gertrude, on the strength of an old assurance from

lady E. that there was a bed for him at the Hall whenever he could avail himself of it.

Gertrude and her brother chatted away principally upon home topics for some time ; Alice wished herself away, but Gertrude would not hear of her going just yet : Mrs. Burns had been making cheese-cakes, and she must stay to taste them. At length twilight began to fall around.

" Roland, you are looking thin," said his sister, playfully turning his face to the light ; " thinner than you were at Christmas ; what is the reason of it ? "

" I am sure I do not know," said her brother ; " because I have not you to take care of me, I suppose, dear Gertrude, or else that I am getting old ; I know of no other reason."

" It is neither the one nor the other," said Gertrude ; " the fact is, Roland, you are working too hard ; I have been sure of it from your letters."

" No, dear Gertrude," he replied very seriously, " you must not say so ; the work which God appoints is not too hard for any of us,—mine is not. If I did less I should not be doing my duty, nor should I be half so happy as I am. Besides, you know it is far better to wear out than to rust out ; do you not think so, Miss Beckford ? " he added, turning to Alice.

It was an unfortunate question for Alice, she hardly knew what kind of answer she made ; but after a while she discovered that Mr. Colton was not so stern as he had appeared at first sight, and she was insensibly led to join in the conversation, which was rather cleverly brought round by Gertrude to the point which she had been distressed at not being able to explain in the afternoon.

"But, Roland, we are not saved by works," said she, in reply to some remark made by her brother.

"Do not mistake me, Miss Beckford, I do not say *ought*; I say he *will* do so, as naturally as a tree which has the sap healthily circulating through its branches, will bear fruit; it will be his aim and desire to do so, not, as I said before, because he hopes to be saved thereby; not because it is a pleasure to his own heart to do good; but simply and wholly because this very faith makes it his delight to serve and please God."

"But," said Alice, who now felt really interested in the subject, "it does not seem to me that all people have work appointed for them; many cannot be district visitors or Sunday-school teachers: what can they do?"

"None need despair for want of work, Miss Beckford; if we would but each seek out our portion, depend upon it there is enough for us all to do. District visiting and Sunday-school teaching are each excellent, but they are only two out of a thousand means by which we can work for God."

Alice looked puzzled; "I really cannot see where they are to be found," said she.

"Permit me to remark," said Mr. Colton with extreme gentleness, "that perhaps it has never struck you to look for them. There is very often more work around our own doors and within our own homes than we are at all aware of, to say nothing of that daily and most difficult work of all, the curbing of our own wills, tempers, and inclinations. It never seems to strike some people, that in a world in which all things work, some for one good end, some for another, *they* have no right to remain idle."

"I fear your standard is too high a one for me, Mr. Colton," said Alice. "Do you not think so, Gertrude?"

"I do not think we can have too high a standard," replied Gertrude. "Is it not Leighton, Roland, who says, 'The higher we aim the higher we shall shoot, though we shoot not so high as we aim?'"

The conversation continued some time longer, and was only broken by Alice rising to take her leave. "I wish I could always be with you, Gertrude," said

she, as her friend was assisting her to dress ; “ I think I might then learn to be of some use, however little, to my fellow-creatures. I must come to see you very often ; you will teach me, will you not, Gertrude ? ”

“ Seek higher teaching than mine, dear Alice ; you know how gladly I would in any way become your helper, but without this higher teaching, mine would be of little avail.”

“ I know what you mean, Gertrude. I do not think I have ever yet sought that teaching as I ought ; I am so—I don’t know what to call it—so fickle, so changeable ; I never can rely upon retaining my good impressions ; what at one time appears to me so right and necessary, at another I seem to care nothing about.”

Long and strange were the communings which Alice Beckford held that night with her own heart. For the first time in her life, the thought flashed upon her that *she* possessed not the saving faith of which Mr. Colton had spoken, and which was evidently the mainspring of that wide difference which she had often acknowledged as existing between herself and Gertrude. It was a startling idea, but one which she did not strive to dismiss until she had earnestly and prayerfully resolved that the aim and object of her future life, under the guidance of that Divine teaching to which Gertrude had pointed, should be to gain possession and bring forth the fruits of that “ faith which worketh by love.”

As we have before hinted, Alice was in no way destitute of the seeds of many excellent qualities ; her great defect had hitherto been the want of a firm and fixed purpose to do what she knew to be right. She

erred, not so much by delighting in pursuits which were positively evil, as by an over-love for, and a habit of attaching undue importance to, those which, if used in moderation, were in themselves perfectly lawful and harmless. She could admire the good actions of others, but had never felt sufficient emulation to cause her to imitate them herself. The task on which she entered, was, to one of her mental constitution and pre-conceived ideas, one of much greater difficulty than it would have been to many others. Old opinions had to be given up, old habits to be discarded, old inclinations for dress and pleasure to be often denied ; the cutting sarcasm had to be borne, the lively jest to be parried ; but, “as thy days, so shall thy strength be !”—it was the work of time, but it was accomplished at last.

Years passed away. There is a quiet parsonage-house, in the little drawing-room sits its mistress, busily engaged in writing ; the door opens, and her husband enters.

“Come, Alice dear,” we hear him say ; “still at work,—what are you doing ? Making up the report of the Missionary Society ? Well, put away your writing for once, and we will have a little holiday. Here is a letter from Gertrude, to say that she and her husband will be over to tea. Do you know it is seven years to-day since I first saw you ?”

“I know it is, dear Roland ; I, of all others, ought not to forget it.”

“Your opinions are altered since then, dear. Now you are always at work ; but then, if you remember,

you thought you were hardly called upon to be a worker,—that there was nothing for you to do. What has changed you so, Alice? you are not hoping to be saved by works, are you?"

"Dear Roland, may I hope it is this?" and, her eyes filling with tears, Alice opened a Testament on the table, and pointed to the words, "Whosoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even our faith.*"

L I F E.

THEY say this life is but a wreath
 Of vapour, melting in the sky;
The small frail flower which grows beneath,
 Then drooping, shuts its languid eye;
A tale repeated round the hearth,
Made half of mourning, half of mirth;
A bubble, bursting in the light;
A meteor, streaming on the night;
A dream, a tear, a smile, a sigh,
A breath——The breath of Deity!
A tale? Yes, one that's quivering
On every raptured seraph's string.
Since this poor clay enshrined a God,
And the lone path so meekly trod,
Adoring, wonderingly they've traced,
Through all our misery-haunted waste.
A bubble? At its burst there falls
A diamond from its brittle thralls,
In lustre peerless and divine,
Upon the sainted brow to shine,

Or burn its fearful, livid stain,
Into the woe-doom'd rebel's brain.

Oh, that can be no trivial thing,
However rapidly it fly,
Which bears our souls upon its wing,
And fashions our eternity !
*Though small the seedling, from it grow
Heav'n's boundless bliss, and hell's black woe.*

Life leads to one dark spot—the grave ;
And though the path be strew'd with roses,
Or moaning yew-trees o'er it wave,
What boots it when the daylight closes ?
What even if through the dubious gloom
Of centuries, men point and say,
“The mouldering bones, in yonder tomb,
Once held high rank with honour'd clay,—
I think scarce rivall'd at that day ?”

Ah ! we will ask no boon of fame,
No soft, luxurious path will claim ;
We will not falter, will not weary,
Though difficult our way and dreary,
Though sufferings rack and tempests rage ;
But strive that on one living page,
The angel, stooping from above,
Against our names shall pencil—LOVE.

Through all our frailty, darkness, weakness,
We'll lift our eyes in faith and meekness,

To Him who bore our suffering,
And shields us with his loving wing ;
And while some brother man may borrow,
From deed of ours surcease of sorrow,
In patience labour—patient wait,
Th' unfolding of the glorious gate,
Remembering every thought that springs,
Is freighted with eternal things.

EMILY JUDSON.

CHINESE AND JAPANESE FLOWERS.

IN pictures of Chinese scenery beautiful flower-gardens are represented; though we are assured by M. Breton that in fact they are rarely to be found. A few pots and vases of flowers constitute generally the whole floral treasure attached to a rich man's house. Where a garden is formed, the plants are not commonly distinguished for their rarity or selection. Among those chiefly met with are the carnation, pink, rose, tuberose, camellia, jasmine, and myrtle. The Chinese boast a great variety of the peony, and their painters celebrate it to admiration on their porcelain and varnished cabinet ware. Flowers in China and Japan have commonly but little smell; their lilac, which is very like our own, has not the least fragrance. From the former of these lands we have received the hortensia, first brought to our shores by Lord Macartney; and the chrysanthemum, or golden flower, esteemed for its bright and varied colours, and now to be seen in almost every English garden.

Our engraving represents a few flowers from those eastern lands. The SHOWY LILY (*Gloriosa superba*), consists of six curved folioles, of a fine rose-colour, marked with round spots. It is distinguished by six



projecting stamens and a club-shaped style. This species is a native of Japan. As the people of that country long refused intercourse with the western world, the first bulbs of the showy lily were conveyed clandestinely to Holland by a traveller, named Siebold, and from thence they were introduced, in 1836, to England.

The CAMELLIA (*Camellia Japonica*), is ordinarily of a rich crimson-colour, though there are white, red, yellowish, and purple varieties. It is admired alike for its rose-like flowers, and its shining dark-green leaves. In China this plant bears the name of tea-shrub, as it possesses most of the botanical peculiarities of that shrub, and is nearly allied to it.

The yellow flower in the engraving is the HYPERICUM (*Hypericum monogynum*), which was brought to our country in seed in 1753 : it is an evergreen shrub, and is in blossom from the spring to the autumn.

The LEADWORT (*Plumbago Larpentæ*) is a small but beautiful blue flower, and came to us from the city of Pekin.

The CHINESE PRIMROSE (*Primula Sinensis*) is in its greatest beauty in the latter part of autumn : it is a hardy plant, and will stand through our winter. It was first cultivated with success about thirty years ago at Bromley, in Kent, where it was introduced from Canton. Primroses are great favourites in all countries where they are found, especially with the poets. Bernard Barton thus addresses this flower :—

“ Flower of pale but lovely bloom,
Given to grace my humble room,
On my spirit’s wakened sense
Pour thy silent eloquence.

MARK WENTWORTH;
OR, THE STUDENT'S RESOLVE.

A BRIGHT wood fire was blazing cheerily in the ample grate, in pleasant contrast to the snowy scene without; the beef was faultlessly roasted, the turkey superlatively tender and delicately cooked, and the plum-pudding perfection,—and yet Farmer Wentworth did not seem thoroughly to enjoy his Christmas dinner. Not that there was any alarming failure of his appetite; but the somewhat cloudy look which he had brought with him from church, and the absence of the hearty praise which he usually bestowed on any extraordinary display of his wife's excellent housekeeping, were unmistakable proofs that he was unwontedly ruffled; for certainly any shadow that the minor ills of life could throw over his bronzed, good-humoured countenance, would have vanished at the sight of the good fare and thorough English comfort which his dining-room displayed. His two sons, Mark and Ralph, seemed to feel its genial influence, and their delicate and somewhat careworn-looking mother joined in their conversation with interest and pleasure; but the head of the family remained absent and silent till the meal was over. True, he pressed the good cheer on them, and cut the daintiest

slices for his little pet Ally; the youngest by several years, and his especial darling. But he told none of the old tales which from long-established custom always seemed to form an essential part of the Christmas dinner at Holme Farm, and laughed none of the hearty boisterous laughs that were seldom wanting there at any festive time.

At length, when beef, and turkey, and pudding, and mince-pie had all been amply discussed, and the dessert, dressed out with sprays of yew and berried holly, set upon the polished table, and the family turned round to the fire to enjoy their dessert at ease, the farmer entered upon the subject of his annoyance.

"I cannot think," he began, administering a poke to the glowing logs, that made the sparks fly up in brilliant myriads ; "I cannot think why our parson won't let people go on the old way and enjoy their Christmas as they used to. Why couldn't he just have given us a cheerful sermon, like Mr. Wilson always did before him, proper for Christmas time; and told us to go home and enjoy ourselves. I declare I've no patience with such dismal preaching."

"Why, father, it was all about Christmas," said Mark, the elder of the two lads; "I thought he gave us a very good explanation. I know I never used to listen to Mr. Wilson's sermons, there seemed nothing to remember in them; but you can't help attending to Mr. Franklin, whether you will or not. Simple as his sermons are, there's a great deal to think of in them; I am sure he's a very clever man."

"Well, so he may be," replied the farmer; "I believe he has got you on uncommonly well in your learning;

but the last part of his sermon, now, this morning,—I don't think was at all suited to Christmas. The day is a day to be merry and joyful in, not to think about death and such things; and then, when he finished with that solemn sounding text about the end of everything being at hand, I declare it made me feel quite uncomfortable. It strikes me he must be some sort of a Methodist; neither of the parsons that came before him ever used to say such things."

"But, John," interposed Mrs. Wentworth, "that does not prove that Mr. Franklin is wrong. I am sure there is a wonderful difference in the village since he came here; and he goes about among the people, and seems to care for them body and soul, as if they were all his own flesh and blood. Then there's the Cottage Lecture, and he is always at the Sunday-school,—why, the only thing Mr. Wilson ever did was to read prayers and preach on a Sunday."

"Well, my dear," returned the farmer rather testily, "and that's just what a clergyman ought to do; to mind his own business and let other people mind theirs,—not go harrying after them, and poking into the cottages like Mr. Franklin does. I heard last night, that he had informed against the 'Lion' and got Dakes fined; and if that's true, I call it a most unhandsome thing for him to do. Not but what he's kind in his way; I don't wish to speak against him, for I believe he'd do anything he could for anybody."

"I am sure he would," said Mrs. Wentworth, earnestly; "I never shall forget how kind he was when our poor little Johnny was drowned—never, as long as I live;" and the mother's eyes filled with tears: for

though years had passed, she never could speak without emotion of that death, the only one that had happened in the family. The three tall healthy boys still living were joy and delight to her; and Ally, who came as if to fill the lost babe's place, was a yet dearer treasure; but the mother never could forget the beautiful, fair-haired child, snatched from her just in his second summer by so terrible a death. She was in delicate health at the time, and it was long thought that she would not recover from the shock; indeed, though placid and even cheerful now, she never had regained her former health and spirits.

Yet there was mercy in the blow, and Mrs. Wentworth felt and owned it; for it was then that her minister's gentle but faithful teaching, pressed home to her softened heart by his deep sympathy, was the means of opening her eyes, and, under God, of leading her to seek the salvation of her soul. She was now a sincere and humble Christian, and her husband's open opposition to all personal religion was a great source of trouble to her. In all gentle and wifelike duty she strove to show him the excellence of the religion which she had embraced, and to win him to appreciate their minister and the truths he taught; but further than this his manner soon warned her that she must not go. "He would have no preaching in his house; he hated cant; he did his duty and paid his debts, and no one had a right to say that he was not as good a Christian as the rest of them." Still in other respects he was not an unkind husband, and to his children he was most indulgent. Alice he perfectly idolized, and it was well indeed for the child that by God's blessing on her mother's teach-

ing, she had been led almost from her earliest infancy into the love and fear of God. Nothing else could have saved her from the usual faults of a spoiled child ; for she was the only girl, and her brothers were so much older that she was equally the treasured pet and darling of them all.

She was now just seven years old ; and Ralph, the youngest brother living, past fourteen. Mark was nearly seventeen ; a thoughtful, talented youth, who seemed scarcely to belong to the same family as the others, so little did his intellectual tastes and refinement of look and manner resemble their plain sense and homely bearing. Alice was the most like him, in her delicate childish beauty and rapidly opening mind, and there was something very touching in the attachment that existed between them. He loved to take her with him to the woods, and teach her the names of the trees and flowers, or watch with her the insects and the fishes playing in the clear stream, often carrying her home in his arms if the walk was long, and enjoying the wild notes of the birds, or the sweeping breeze, with a delight as fresh and buoyant as her own. On one subject indeed there was no sympathy between them ; for Mark, with all his knowledge, knew not God ; the Saviour whom his little sister loved as her Saviour, was to him a far-off and unknown being ; but he loved her the better for the simple faith that seemed to him a beautiful development of the true poetry and sublimity of an unsullied heart ; and she never suspected that he who was so good to her, and taught her so much of God's wondrous works, yet stood aloof from him himself, and desired not the knowledge of his ways.

But, to return to the farmer. He too had a keen remembrance of friendly admonitions given to him at the time to which his wife referred, in a tone too candid to be misunderstood and too kind to be repulsed, which had often troubled his secret conscience since ; and not feeling inclined for any further argument, he turned the subject abruptly. " Well, well, my dear, we won't say any more about him. I dare say he is a very good man in his way. Come, dear, nearer to the fire ; you look quite cold. It really was enough to chill anybody through, coming from church this morning. Ally, have another fig, darling, or a gingerbread ? "

" No, thank you, father," said the little one, wistfully.

" No ! why, what's the matter with the child ? let's have a look at you," and he put his hand under her chin, and turned her face up to him. " Why, you look rather pale and heavy about the eyes. Come and sit on my knee a bit, and tell me what it was you wanted me to do for you this morning."

" Oh ! father, it was to send old Mrs. Davis some cowslip wine ; she was so weak and poorly when she came for the beef she could hardly speak. Will you, please, father ? It is Christmas time, you know."

" That I will, dear, a whole bottle, if you like. I dare say it's uncommonly cold in that little bleak place of hers."

" Thank you, dear father, thank you !" said the child gratefully ; " you are always so kind to me," and she put her little arm round his neck and laid her head on his shoulder.

" Who wouldn't be, I wonder !" said the farmer good-humouredly, pressing his rough cheek fondly

against her curly head ; "but who do you think is to take this present of yours ? Do you expect anybody will be kind enough to turn out such an afternoon as this, just for a little girl's fancy ? "

"I will, Ally ; it isn't far," said Ralph readily ; but his brother stopped him.

"No, Ralph, I have finished my dessert, and you have not ; let me go. You and Andrew are always at home, and can do everything for Ally, but I shall soon be away now, you know."

"I wish Andrew was at home," said his father, as Mrs. Wentworth got up to reach the wine, and Mark went for his great-coat ; "it doesn't seem right for him not to be here on Christmas-day, if he is at his uncle's. However, cousins don't come of age every day, and we'll all be together this day week, and bring in the new year merrily. I'll get your mother to write to your uncle and aunt, and we'll have them and all your cousins."

"Father, why don't you ever say 'If the Lord will?' " asked Ally suddenly ; then, meeting her father's astonished look, she added, "Mr. Franklin always says so ; and it came in the reading yesterday at school, so it made me remember it. He said we ought not to say for certain even a day before, because we don't know what may happen."

"Why, Ally, what a capital preacher you would make!" said Ralph laughing. "Mr. Franklin himself could not have said it with a graver face. What do you think is likely to happen between now and next Wednesday ? "

"Nothing, of course," interposed his father hastily ; "such stuff ! What could happen ? I say we will be all together, and have a merry party too."

"But one of us might die, father," said Ally timidly.

"Nonsense, pet; what strange things the child does think of! Little ones like you shouldn't have such ideas, Ally. Lay your head down again and have a nap, if you are tired, till Mark comes back."

The sunny head was laid down, but lifted again in a moment for a parting kiss as her brother passed; and with a promise not to be long away, Mark was soon breathing the keen north wind on his way to the widow's house.

Widow Davis was one of those quaint and strongly-marked characters, the worthy relics of a bygone age, whom we still occasionally meet with in obscure nooks and corners of our agricultural districts. Strong native sense and penetration which even her utter want of education could not wholly disguise, coupled with genuine independence of character and kindness of heart, were characteristics which, even more than her singularly old-fashioned dress and speech, marked her out even to the casual stranger as a woman of no ordinary stamp. Long past the common term of threescore years and ten, she was yet hale and strong; bent indeed somewhat by the pressure of Time's hand, but owning his tyranny in little else. Her hair, drawn smoothly back under a close cap with a plain black ribbon, was nearly white, but the keen grey eyes looked forth from under her dark strong eyebrows with honest intelligence and kindness undimmed by age; and her conversation, broad and provincial indeed in accent, but often rising to a simple loftiness of expression derived from the book of God, was singularly interesting to an unaccus-

tomed listener from its shrewd and downright simplicity Plain spoken, indeed, she was, to every one alike. The only fear she recognised was the fear of God—the God who had visited her in her loneliness and lighted up her old age with the hope of glory; and truly in that fear she walked all the day long.

Her only companion in the cottage where charity had placed her was one son, whom a grievous accident in infancy had rendered helpless and idiotic. He was now a man advanced in life, and the mother whose incessant cares he had demanded for forty years owned but one anxiety for the future—his fate when she should be taken from him. Hers seemed indeed a cheerless lot,—poor, old, worse than alone, burdened with the care of this unhappy object, as helpless and far less pleasant than a child; and Mark, as he walked up to the cottage door, hesitated whether to go in or not; for he had a shrinking dread of encountering the unhappy idiot; but his better feeling prevailed, and he determined to try what he could do for a quarter of an hour to cheer the poor mother in her solitude. It was however with a great feeling of relief that he saw the old checked curtain drawn across the small recess where stood the idiot's bed, and heard that he was having a sound sleep after his dinner. The pleasure too which the old woman expressed on seeing him made him glad that he had not been deterred from entering.

"Ally has sent you some wine, Mrs. Davis," he began, after the first kindly salutations of the season; "she thought it might be good for you. How are you to-day?"

"Well, sir, I'm a little better, I'm thankful to say;

many thanks to Miss Alice for the kind thought ; and to you too, sir, I'm sure, for bringing of it to me this bitter cold day. How are they all at your house, sir?"

" All well, thank you, Mrs. Davis ; Andrew is not at home, however ; he is staying with my uncle James, keeping Christmas at W—— this year. Uncle would have him stay over to-day, or else it seems hardly natural for him to be away. We have always been used to be together."

" Surely, sir, surely," returned the old woman ; " and a good old way it is ; and yet," she added, in a different tone, " it makes such days bring a strange feeling over one when all those be dead and gone that used to keep 'em with us."

" I never thought of that," said Mark.

" How should you, sir, and you so young and light-some ? And yet it's a lesson some have to learn young too ; but I doubt it comes hard then. I kept my Christmases for a matter of six-and-thirty years and never thought on it,—and that six-and-thirtieth time there was my husband and seven children round me, all as healthy and merry as you'd see anywhere,—and now there's only he left of them ;" and she looked towards the corner where her son lay sleeping.

" You must feel very lonely sometimes," said the youth compassionately.

" Well, sir, I'm by myself a good deal, for I was never one that was fond of neighbouring ; but Mrs. Franklin comes in sometimes to read to me, and sometimes your mother, and then I can spell out a bit in the Testament pretty fairish myself now, though I was an old scholar when I began to learn. So I'm never lonely.

No, sir ; thank God, I have that which keeps loneliness away."

" You have a secret then that many would give a good deal for."

" Ay, truly, master Mark ; but it's a secret no money can buy ; a blessing the world can neither give nor take away—the peace of God that passeth understanding. There be many that say, ' Who will show us any good ? ' poor, blindfold creatures, groping after it and taking up with any idle thing they catch, and never satisfied ; but when God gives sight to the soul, the only thing it craves is the light of his countenance, and that can shine anywhere. It has lighted me now well nigh forty years, and I trust as it 'll 'bide with me till the end."

" You have not always felt so then, Mrs. Davis."

" No, sir, no ; for more than forty years I lived without the knowledge or the love of God. I was puffed up with my own righteousness, master Mark, and thought because I'd always led a decent life and went to church regular, that I hadn't anything to be afraid of ; and for the best part of the time I was as happy as a godless creature could be. But the Lord had mercy on me in my blindness, and sent trouble on trouble to stir me out of my sinful rest. First, my husband was taken ; then my children, one after the other—five of them were cut off just as they were growing up ; only Dick and poor Mary left, and she's gone now. Oh, sir ! it was hard to bear, but I can see now there was a needs-be, and I can look back and see things that I didn't rightly understand at the time, which make me hope that they are all of them safe in

heaven. I'll tell you how it was, sir. There was no minister like Mr. Franklin here then, you know; the only folks who ever spoke out the truth to people about their souls, were some that used to have meetings in old John Trotman's house, the father of the one that is now. Well, sir, it was there my husband used to go, and some of the children would go one time and some another, and sorely he wanted me to go too, but I wouldn't; and I tried all I could to keep him away. Howsoever, sir, it was there they learned the way to heaven just as 'tis preached in the church now-a-days; but I set my face right against it, till I was just worn down with trouble; and my poor Betsy, that was the last of them, died begging me to think about my soul. Well, sir, I went then; and I thank God for that day. It was a hard struggle even then, and I think if my heart hadn't been fairly broken down with sorrow I shouldn't ever have come into the right way and been content to give up all that I had trusted in so long. So you see, sir, I have cause to bless God for it all."

"And can you really say that you are happier now than you were before your troubles came?"

"Well, you know, sir, I used to be what folks call happy then. I was well to do, and always busy and satisfied with myself; but as for being happy, to my thinking there can't be any real happiness without there's peace, and I never had any sober peace, not in my own mind, till God gave me peace with Him. There's a text of Scripture that says, 'Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace;' and another, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;' and they are true words, master Mark, good and

true for rich and poor, old and young. They tell me that you are uncommon clever, sir, and are going to college to be made a great man of, and I doubt it's true. Maybe you'll earn honour and a wonderful name in the world, and yet find it all vanity and vexation of spirit ; and if you do, master Mark, think on those words, for they are the words of God. And if it falls out t'other way, and you find pleasure and pride in them, as 'tis like you will—at least at first—there's another word that I'd pray God to keep sounding in your ears, I mean that one Mr. Franklin finished with to-day : ‘The end of all things is at hand ; be ye therefore sober.’ ‘Tis a needful warning to young hearts, for they are apt to think there's no end of time afore them. Must you be going, sir?’ she asked, as Mark rose from the low arm-chair where he had been sitting : “I hope I hav'n't tired you with my talk. Old folks are fond of talking, you know.” *

“No, Mrs. Davis, I am not tired, indeed : but I promised Ally not to be long, and I must go.”

“Will you be pleased then to thank the dear young lady for me, sir ? and many thanks to you for coming to see a poor old woman like me. God be with you, sir, wherever you go, and keep you in his fear.”

“Good bye, Mrs. Davis, and thank you for your good wishes ;” and with a quick step, and a mind full of unwonted thought, Mark Wentworth left the cottage.

There is something in the clear, still beauty of a moon-light sky, very fascinating to a thoughtful spirit, and Mark felt its influence that night in his silent chamber.

The evening had passed off very quietly, strangely so indeed for the season, in that cheerful homestead ; but the farmer in consenting, however unwillingly, to the absence of his eldest son, had not only steadily refused to leave his own fireside at Christmas, but resolved to put off all the customary rejoicings till Andrew's return. So he sat quietly by the large chimney, conversing pleasantly with his wife and children, while Mark and his little sister, seated on the large old-fashioned black leather sofa, looked over the great family Bible with its quaint woodcuts, pictures that Ally never wearied of when she had her brother by her to explain them. This evening she soon tired, however, and nestling against his shoulder, with his arm round her, fell fast asleep. Thence she was removed, not unwillingly, to bed ; and Mark, leaning back against the ample cushions, listened to his father's occasional remarks, and watched his mother's placid face bending over her book, or gazed into the glowing fire with a mind far otherwise occupied. The deep though unacknowledged impression which the solemn truths of the morning's sermon had made upon him, renewed by the homely warning so unexpectedly received, was working a strange tumult within, of dissatisfied and conflicting thought. His reverie was hardly interrupted by the introduction of supper, and he was glad when his father, with an exclamation of surprise at the lateness of the hour, declared that it was time for every-one to be in bed.

Mark's little dormitory, which also served him as a quiet retreat for study, and was in fact his favourite room, had been fitted up chiefly by his own hands, with

neat shelves for his books ; and a plain square table in the middle was strewed with them and with sheets of finished and unfinished diagrams and problems. He paused at it for a moment, and glanced over them. There was one problem half-completed from which he had risen unwillingly to get ready for church that morning; but he was in no mood to resume the calculation of it. Setting down his candle, he walked to the window, and resting both arms on the high ledge below it, gazed long on the beautiful scene before him, and gave the reins to his thoughts. It would have been hard to decide whether earth or sky looked the lovelier that night. Above, the moon, clear and full, moved steadily on in her majestic orbit, flooding the scattered clouds that now and then crossed her pathway, with her pure, silvery radiance ; below lay the unsullied snow in a broad, spotless sheet, on which the still shadows of the heavily loaded firs and larches lay clear and black, except when the fitful wind swept through them, bringing down large noiseless masses of their wintry burden. Gloom and radiance, calm and strife, were strangely mingled in them both. The moon, walking in brightness along her allotted path, alike through cloud and calm, showed like some meek, pure spirit breasting the ills of life and rising above its woes, strong in light and glory borrowed from another ; and the trees, bending before the wind, and rising lightened after every gust, told not dimly of the sweet and holy uses of adversity. We do not say, however, that Mark read just these lessons in the scene before him ; indeed, he gazed upon it till it ceased to occupy a distinct place in his mind, and only blended and harmonized with his previous meditations.

"Strange," he murmured, "if these things are true, that the world can go on as it does, so heedless of them; that the present can so completely shut out the future; most men living as if the end would never come. Politics, business, pleasure, and money-getting fill up their hearts, and religion hardly seems to enter into the calculation at all; yet what madness it is to neglect it! And learning too—science, that I have followed after so earnestly; fame, that I have thirsted for as the supremest bliss of life, what are they better? I have despised others for their low, short-sighted views; let me see how my loftier aims will stand the test. If the end of all things is at hand, of what avail is this restless pursuit of earthly knowledge? It may be in the midst of the struggle that the Judge will come, and then where shall I be, who have given no thought to be ready? And if not so, if this fair earth should roll on unchanged another thousand or two thousand years, the end of all things may yet be at hand for me. There is no device nor wisdom in the grave. And suppose I should have time to climb the high path I have marked out for myself; to pioneer the way to untrodden fields of science; if I should be famed above my wildest dreaming,—what will it profit me when I lie down in the grave? Forty, fifty, sixty years, perhaps, of honour and applause, and what then? The moon may look down as she does to-night, and under the snow in that church-yard there will be another grave, another heart with all its throbings stilled, another brain, once full of high thoughts and strivings, food for the worm. I must leave all that I have won, and go to stand alone before my Judge,—and what will these things matter to me then? except,

indeed, that they will prove me guiltier, rendering nothing for so much received. Better to be yonder idiot ; for he at least will have no account to render. Strange that I never looked at it in this way before, and that those words to-day should have brought it all before me. ‘Poor, blindfold creatures !’—even so ; and I, who have valued myself on intellect and talent, stand convicted of arrant folly before that poor old woman. I, who can measure distance and calculate far-off space and yet never gave a thought till now to the proportion between a lifetime and eternity !”

The young man buried his face in his hands, and paced restlessly to and fro. The preacher’s closing address and the poor widow’s simple warning had indeed been words in season to him. They met him just in the full flush of youth and hope ; and, winged by the Spirit of the living God, they piercéd to his very soul. There was nothing new in the truths conveyed ; but they came to him with a flash of light from heaven, smiting his pride down to the dust, and there was bitter self-reproach, as well as sorrow, in his repentant musings. His was no variable mind, lightly moved and easily forgetting ; there was a sober earnestness in his character, a depth of resolute and steady will, not soon roused, but firm and instant in its determination when once awakened.

“It shall be so no longer !” he said, at length, pausing again in front of the moonlit casement ; “I see that with all my proud thoughts of myself I have been a very fool ; but I will be one no longer. It is not yet too late.” The firm brow softened to a look of humbleness as his thoughts pursued their course. “Not too late ! O God, I thank thee, for there is no reservation

in thy word. ‘All ye that labour,’—and I know too that it says somewhere ‘Whosoever will,’—even I,—indifferent and ungrateful as I have been, Lord, I come now; look down on me in mercy. Help me to put aside all other objects and seek first peace with thee; to give my soul no rest till this great matter is set right. I know there is a way; shame on me that I have never cared to understand it; henceforth it shall be my first concern. Help me, O God; teach me to seek thy face, for I am blind, blind and ignorant !”

It was a heartfelt prayer that went up in these words, and it was heard for the sake of Him whom as yet Mark knew not. His idea of religion was a mere poetical deism, in which a Saviour had no place, and his prayer was consequently one which a heathen might have uttered. It was folly rather than sin that he deplored; peace rather than pardon that he sought; a service of duty and fear rather than of grateful love to which he looked forward. But the desire came from God, and he looked down in mercy on that first movement of the heart towards him. That night was a crisis in Mark Wentworth’s history; it was the first time he had ever really prayed. Reader, does your memory bear the record of such a crisis in your own soul’s history? or have you lived till now at a distance from, and at variance with your Maker? Glance not idly over this page and then go on your way forgetful; but pause and think out, as he did, the problem, “What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”

Nearly three weeks had passed away, and it was the eve of Mark’s departure for college. One large trunk,

packed and corded, stood in the middle of his room, and another near the table was half filled with books, which their owner was busily arranging, so as to fill the least possible space. Piles of solid, dingy looking volumes, on various scientific subjects, lay upon the table ready to join their companions; and having arranged the others to his satisfaction, Mark rose from his half kneeling posture to reach a fresh supply. His hand passed carelessly over one or two, and rested on a handsome pocket Bible that lay among them, evidently quite new, for even the neat protecting cover was yet fresh and glossy. Apparently, the sight turned his thoughts into another channel; for, half seating himself upon the corner of the table, he unfastened the silver clasps with a heavy sigh, and resting the volume on his knee, turned to the title-page. It was but a brief record that met his eye, couched in little more than the customary form—"Alice Wentworth, the gift of her dear mother on her seventh birth-day. October 8th, 18—." "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." But, simple as it was, the young man gazed upon it thoughtfully and long; then, taking a folded paper from his pocket-book, drew from it a little curl of golden hair, and laid it reverently between the pages. It was his sister's hair—his sister's book—nay, hers no longer, but his—her dying gift. Alice was gone. The tender Shepherd had folded his little lamb, had recalled in love the frail blessing which his love had given. The wintry wind had done a fatal work that Christmas-day, cold and inflammation followed; and before the new year's day so surely reckoned on, the child was dead. We will not dwell upon the closing

scene. The mother from the first perceived with a mother's quick foreboding that the Lord had called the child, and bowed to his will humbly and trustfully, though with a heart of anguish such as none but a mother similarly circumstanced can conceive ; while the father, refusing to believe that he could lose his darling, summoned every medical aid within reach, and hoped to the last, then settled down into a deep silent grief, very touching in one of his free, open character. Andrew was summoned, and the aunt and uncle came too, not to the festive scene intended, but to follow the cherished little one to the quiet village churchyard, where they laid her.

How had Mark borne the blow ? There was a strange calm on his spirit, even while he watched her parting struggle with a bleeding heart, and stood beside her grave, for in his new feeling of the importance of eternity, life seemed a thing of little moment ; he knew that she was safe, and he would have given up all his earthly hopes to lie there in her stead, if he could have done so with the same child-like trust.

Perhaps it was upon her happiness rather than his loss that he was dwelling as he sat there in that fit of musing, for there was scarcely a shade of sadness on his brow, though he looked pale and thin. A slow step and then a low tap at his door followed by his mother's voice roused him, and he hastily closed the book and laid it in his trunk, then opened the door and asked her to come in. She stood a moment in the middle of the room and noted his preparations with an eye and lip that tried hard to be cheerful.

" You are getting on nicely with your packing, my dear boy."

"Yes, mother, thanks to you; all my things were put in such nice order, I had only my books to look up and I shall soon have finished them. Come to the fire and sit down with me a little while this last afternoon."

Mrs. Wentworth took the chair he placed, and looked sadly round at the bare shelves and empty drawers that spoke so drearily of change and absence.

"I could scarcely fancy till now that you were really going, Mark; the time seems to have come on so rapidly. I shall miss you very much."

"I am afraid it will be lonely for you, mother dear," said the youth kneeling down beside her, and with a tenderness in his tone that brought tears into her eyes; "I would have put off going for another term, you know, only my father would not hear of it."

"No, my son, he was quite right, it would only be keeping you back, and I shall be stronger and better soon, I hope. I ought not to grieve for Ally, she is safe and blessed for ever. It is about you, my dear boy, that I have thought most anxiously for some time past, and I have been wishing for an opportunity of speaking to you before you go."

"I am glad you have found one, mother; only tell me what it is, and I will try and satisfy you. Is it anything I have said or done that has troubled you?"

"No, Mark, nothing; few sons could ever have done less to trouble a mother's heart. It is the thought that you are going into the world, without the only principle that can be a safeguard against its snares. You have always been quiet and dutiful, and I believe that your natural disposition would keep you from gross

evil; but there is another danger that makes me tremble for you. You have been brought up in plain Christian truth, and you have heard it from the pulpit, but I am afraid it has had no entrance into your heart. Your studies and your hopes for the future have shut it out, and now you are going where all these things are openly questioned among thoughtful but unsettled minds. It is by these wild speculations that I fear your being led away. You remember young Harding, Mark."

"I do, mother; and I do not wonder at your fears; but I trust they will not be realized."

"God grant they may not, my son; but there is a strange deceitfulness about these things. They come over the mind little by little, so that you do not know where they are leading you till you awake from their fascination and find yourself without hope and without God in the world. You have your Bible, Mark, and you promised Ally to read it—promise me that you will never read or listen to anything that would lower your trust in that holy book."

"I will promise, mother, to avoid them as I would the plague."

"God keep you, my dear, dear son, and give you the same faith in the Saviour whom that book reveals that made our little Ally's life and death so peaceful. She was a little simple child, and you are older and have much more of this world's wisdom; but there is one way for all, and you must lay aside that wisdom and become a little child to tread this way."

Large quiet tears were rolling down her cheeks as she spoke; for she was yet unnerved and weak from

her recent trial. Mark pressed her hand affectionately, and for a few moments both were silent. Then he spoke in a voice steady and resolute but none the less indicative of deep emotion.

"Mother, I have something to say as well, that ought perhaps to have been told before. I scarcely know why I have not spoken—perhaps it was pride; perhaps because it was not easy to begin, but I must tell you now. God has been merciful to me and turned my heart towards him. You must praise him for your son as well as pray."

Mrs. Wentworth clasped her hands in speechless thankfulness, and it was some moments before Mark could command his voice sufficiently to proceed. Then he went on.

"You remember that sermon on Christmas-day, mother; it was that that first opened my eyes and led me to seek after God. I began ignorantly and presumptuously, but he soon made me feel my helplessness. I found that all my life had been sin; because, in defiance of the great commandment, I had loved myself and my studies, you and Alice—everything—better than my God, and I felt myself guilty and inexcusable before him. Then I thought of Jesus. I heard Alice speak of him, and I turned to him for hope, but I found I could not even believe on him. Oh mother that was a wretched time, but his blessed Spirit kept me from despair and helped me to pray on, and now the light has come. I have trusted my soul to the Lord Jesus Christ, and I believe that in him God looks on me with love. I know I am sinful still, and liable to fall, but I am his:—the great affair of life is settled, and I go forth with his peace

upon my spirit. I thought at one time that I should never care for earthly learning again ; but I see that I was wrong. I must use the talents God has given me, and walk my path in life as other men, and he will be with me. I shall study none the less earnestly because I have a higher motive, and walk none the less happily because I can look on with a calm heart to the end."

THE PORTRAIT OF PEACE.

SWEET Peace, the gift of our departed Saviour,
How lovely and attractive is thy mien !
Thy features wear, through all life's toils and turmoils,
An aspect ever gentle and serene.

Clear is thine open brow as that of childhood,
Reminding us of fair and cloudless skies ;
Nor bitter tear-drops, nor resentful feelings,
Dim the soft radiance of thy dove-like eyes.

Simplicity and frankness rule thine actions,
And unobtrusive is thy course on earth ;
Yet grace and dignity mark every gesture,
For thou art conscious of thy lofty birth.

Thou walkest at our side through life's stern conflict
With gentle bearing, yet with dauntless tread ;
Whispering in angel tones those words that solace
Our drooping hearts, and banish all our dread.

When from the spirit-land some evil tempter
Would dark suspicions of God's love suggest,
Thine is the harp whose wondrous strain repelleth
The wily foe, and soothes our doubts to rest.

The vehement, accusing voice of conscience,

Thou hushest with thine all-entrancing spell ;
And when thou bearest o'er the troubled waters
An olive-leaf, with hope our bosoms swell.

Joy seldom grants us more than transient visits,

For earth's rough blasts soon frighten him away ;
But thou art the loved inmate of our dwelling,
Through all our changes well content to stay.

Sweet Peace, without the sunshine of thy presence,
How dark would be this world of care and sorrow !
How could we brave the evils of to-day,
Or boldly meet the trials of to-morrow ?

But while our hand is linked in thine, we shrink not
From rugged pathways that before us lie ;
Nor fear, while thy glad smile upon us resteth,
The storm-clouds gathering o'er an angry sky.

Wars and their rumours may perplex the nations ;
Thrones may upheave, and ancient kingdoms fall ;
Shadows may deepen on the world's horizon ;
And signs of terror every heart appal.

But thy soft touch, O Peace, calms our emotion ;
Our tear-dimm'd glances freshen'd lustre gain ;
And we can read in coming strifes, the tokens
Of thy benign and universal reign.



EAST INDIAN FLOWERS.

INDIA possesses rare vegetable treasures, from the stately palm to the lowly mustard-seed. Among its flowering plants, those "symbols of joy, formed to please mankind," is the INDIAN ROSE-BAY (*Rhododendron arboreum*). Its blossoms are of a deep vermillion colour, and grow in clusters of ten to twenty on a stem. A native of the mountains of Nepaul, it was introduced into England in 1817, where it was at first treated as a hothouse plant, but has been found to bear well the cold of our winter.

Another Nepalese flower, the BAPTISIA NEPAUL, is of a yellow colour, and has curiously shaped petals.

The HOARY OSBECKIA, (*Osbeckia canescens*,) is a small purple-rose coloured flower. Its generic name was given to it in honour of the Rev. P. Osbeck, a Swedish clergyman, who introduced it to the notice of Europe; and its specific name is derived from the hoary appearance of its stems. Some species are natives of Africa and America.

The HIBISCUS SPLENDENS belongs to one of the three tribes into which the mallow family of plants is divided, and all of whose stems yield a useful fibre, which is used as a substitute for flax and hemp. It is streaked

with pink on a whitish ground. The RUELLIA is a pale blue flower, of the family of Acanthus. In English hot-houses it brings forth numerous showy blossoms.

At the upper part of our picture is the LONG-HORNED DENDROBIUM, (*Dendrobium longicornu*,) first brought from India by Dr. Wallich. It belongs to the natural order Orchidæ. Travellers describe it as a beautiful object as it is seen climbing the branches of its native mountain woods. The flowers are large, whitish, funnel-shaped, fringed with yellow, and scentless.

As we gaze on these beauties of the flowery earth, we may well say with the poet—

“ O God ! O good beyond compare !
If thus thy meaner works are fair,
If thus thy beauties gild the span
Of ruin'd earth and sinful man,
How glorious must that mansion be
Where thy redeem'd shall dwell with thee !”

THE FAMILY PORTRAITS AT THE HALL.

A SMALL party of sight-seers had roamed at pleasure over the fine park of W—— Hall ; and were now seated on a grassy slope, beneath the shade of a clump of majestic trees.

The scenery spread around them was very beautiful. An artificial lake, fed by a small river which wound through the park, lay placidly just below them ; and, on every side, rose stately forest trees, many of them centuries old, and now in the first pure tints of early summer. In the glades of the park were numbers of fallow deer, quietly feeding ; and at the distance of half-a-mile, the time-worn front and terraced walks of the ancient seat were partly visible, and partly hidden by the foliage in which it was embowered.

“ Is there not a fine picture-gallery in W—— Hall ? ” asked one of the young ladies of the party.

“ Yes, Enma. I believe that some of the pictures, at any rate, are considered fine by competent judges. It is many years since I saw them.”

“ You have seen them, then, uncle ? ”

“ Yes, my dear ; and though W—— Hall is not what is called ‘ a show house,’ I believe I have sufficient interest to obtain admittance for our party to view the

picture-gallery. Indeed, I thought of this before we left home."

"Oh, thank you, uncle." "Thank you, sir." "That was very kind of you, Mr. S.;" were the responses the leader of the excursion received. And as the most tired of the party declared herself sufficiently rested, no time was lost in putting the design into execution.

"Is the family at the Hall now, sir?" asked another of the young people, as they walked along the grand avenue towards the principal entrance.

"No, I believe not," said Mr. S.; "the owners spend the greater part of the year, either in London or on the continent. They are seldom at W——, except for a few weeks in winter: they always 'keep Christmas' at the Hall, for instance; but they speak of it in disparaging terms, and say that they have no taste for the country."

"They must have a very perverted taste, I think, uncle," Emma observed. "At least, I should pity myself if I could not find pleasure all the year round on such a beautiful estate as this. And if I were obliged to live part of the year in London, I would take care it should not be in the summer."

"Tastes differ, Emma," said her uncle; "and our own personal tastes and predilections change with changing circumstances and the advance of years. We cannot tell what may happen to cast a blighting memory over the fairest scenes of nature; and then—— But here we are at the Hall; let us see if we can obtain admittance;" and Mr. S. rang the bell.

A very short interview with a respectable female, who recognised Mr. S., and who, as housekeeper,

had charge of the Hall, at once settled the question to the satisfaction of the visitors ; and a few minutes afterwards, escorted by her, they had commenced the inspection, not only of the picture-gallery, but of the principal rooms in the mansion.

There was much to admire in W—— Hall. Many of the rooms were magnificent, and richly furnished ; but an air of neglect was everywhere manifest, especially in the library, where some thousands of costly volumes were in various stages of decay from damp and moth ; their rich bindings tarnished, and their substance worm-eaten and discoloured. They were piled on the shelves in wretched confusion, and dust and cobwebs plainly showed that the library was a rarely-entered room.

One of the ancestors of the present owner had been—according to the housekeeper's account,—a very “bookish gentleman ;” and he had not only made large additions to the library, but had spent most of his time in writing. And as he lived to a good old age, he must have written a good deal of one sort and another, she added. Indeed, there was enough remaining in the library to confirm this opinion. A heap of musty manuscripts, yellow with age, encumbered one of the upper shelves ; and being permitted to examine them, Mr. S. and his young companions found them to be in the same handwriting throughout ; an old-fashioned, formal, cramped hand it was, in obsolete spelling, and not very easy to be deciphered. As far as could be gathered by a hasty glance at some of the most legible papers, the subjects which had exercised the brain and employed the pen of the old gentleman were connected with now exploded systems of philosophy ; and learned

disquisitions on abstruse theological points. But, whatever were the merits of the writer, he had evidently taken much labour in vain ; for—as the housekeeper informed the curious visitors—there had not been much store set upon the writings at any time ; they had moreover been wofully diminished by former housemaids and cooks, who had been in the habit of abstracting them from time to time for culinary purposes ; and the mice would soon make an end of them all. These statements were abundantly confirmed by the mutilated state in which most of the manuscripts were found.

There were other objects in the library, which had greater charms for a young gentleman in the party than the dilapidated manuscripts ; such as a suit of ancient armour, and a large two-handed sword, almost devoured by rust, which he was told had been worn, borne, and used in battle by an ancestor of the family, of a much earlier date than the “bookish old gentleman.” There were relics, too, of the civil wars, in a pair of enormous thick and large boots, which were averred to have belonged to one of the Cromwell’s Ironsides, and a pair of massive spurs to match.

But the picture-gallery was the object of the visit ; and thither the visitors soon repaired.

Many of the pictures were family portraits of past generations, and differed in no essential particular from similar collections elsewhere : but it is of these alone that we have now to write. There was, for instance, an iron-sheathed, stern-looking man, of middle age, who lived and fought, and was slain more than five hundred years ago, when gentlemen of his rank were more familiar with the sword than with the pen. This was the

ancestor to whom the suit of armour and the two-handed sword in the library had belonged.

Then there was the lady of this same warrior,—a mournful-looking dame, in a strange square head-dress of white linen, and long hanging sleeves trimmed with fur. There were other ladies of later dates; some young and some who were no longer young, when their portraits were taken. Some looked mild and pensive; others, harsh and stern; and others, simpering and abashed. One, clothed in dark, close-fitting garments of the times preceding the Reformation, was represented as holding in her hand, and pressing to her bosom, a silver crucifix; while another, in a jewelled head-dress and starched ruff, which told of the days of Queen Elizabeth, was portrayed with an open Bible before her, on which her hand was laid and her eyes were fixed.

There were gentlemen of these periods also,—some in the garb of heroes; one in that of a judge; and others attired as gentlemen simply, without any distinctive mark of calling or office.

Two portraits there were to which a melancholy history—as told by the housekeeper—was attached. They were those of a young couple: the gentleman, kindly and loving in his aspect, habited in the costume of the first Charles's reign, with vandyke collar, long flowing ringlets, parted in the middle of his forehead, and small pointed beard: the lady, exceedingly beautiful in countenance, and rich in attire of the same troubled period. They were husband and wife; and in the civil war which eventually cost the king his crown and life, the young husband became a soldier, and bade farewell to his wife, a month after their nuptials, never to see

her again. He was killed in a fierce battle with his own countrymen ; and the distracted widow, after witnessing the partial destruction of the Hall, took refuge in the cottage of a former tenant, where she lingered only to give birth to a son, and then died, impoverished and broken-hearted. So ran the legend.

The portrait of the son was there also, taken when he had arrived at man's estate, and regained his family home and honours. Noble-looking, like his father, he wanted the charm of benevolence and sedateness which gave grace to his father's portrait. His dress was in the fashion of disfiguring foppishness, which succeeded the restoration of the second Charles. A story was connected with that picture also. The boy had lived in obscurity, dependent on the bounty of others, till he became a man : then he was introduced to the recently-restored king, and sank into the deepest profligacies of a profligate court. He married ; neglected his wife ; and died young, a hardened sinner.

There were still other portraits,—belles and beaux of later periods,—some attired in the masquerade of shepherds and shepherdesses ; some in their natural characters of country gentlemen and ladies, the former in broad skirted, collarless coats, red, blue, and violet, embroidered cravats, and powdered wigs, the latter in hoops and elaborate head-dresses. One relic of these times there was, touching and painful, though at first sight it excited a natural smile on the countenances of the young visitors. It was the waxen effigy of a child, a girl of six or seven years old, dressed in the extreme of the womanly fashion of a hundred years since. Prim and demure, she sat in state in a small but expensively

wrought chair of carved work, with fan in hand, and the meaningless painted face disfigured with patches, and the false hair still showing traces of powder. A glass case had hitherto preserved the characteristic figure from the ravages of time and dust.

"What a strange little object!" observed Emma, with a smile; but the temptation to ridicule was gone when she heard that the waxen figure was the representation of a child who died in her mother's arms, and of whom a mother's love had contrived this frail, though long-preserved memorial. Little solid comfort had the memorial given, however; for, from the hour of the loved one's death had the mother pined, and pined, until she sank into an early grave.

A portrait of the mother adorned the gallery. Gentle and shrinking she seemed, and presented a strong contrast to the sturdy squire whom the visitors were given to understand was her husband; and who, dressed in a gold laced frock, held in one hand a bugle and a hunting-whip, and with the other caressed a large hound by his side.

One picture more, and we have done. It was that of a youth some eighteen or twenty years of age, and in a more modern costume than any the visitors had hitherto noticed. It was a full-length portrait, and the dress was that of a sportsman. A gun was in the young man's hand, a shot-belt was suspended from his shoulder, and at his feet was a handsome dog, represented as looking wistfully up into his young master's face. The painting was exquisitely executed, and the countenance of the youth was handsome and expressive.

The picture was richly framed, and great care seemed

to be taken to preserve it from dust and exposure, for a thick curtain was drawn over it ; and when the house-keeper uncovered it, it was with a deliberate and solemn movement, and a look of seriousness amounting almost to sorrow.

"It is not often that this picture is uncovered, sir," she said in a low voice to Mr. S.

"I suppose not," he replied : and added, with a sigh, "Poor Henry!"

It seemed strange to the young people of the party that the withdrawal of that thick curtain should cast a gloom over the spirits both of their friend, Mr. S., and the housekeeper. But it was so ; and the gloom had not passed away when they left the picture-gallery.

There was not much more to be seen at W—— Hall. The gardens and greenhouses were in a state of neglect : —"Not fit to be seen," said the housekeeper ; and the fine shrubberies with which, at one time, such pains and expense had been taken, she added with a sigh, were overrun with weeds. "Nothing has been as it used to be since—since *then*, Mr. S.," said she ; "and no wonder."

It was quite a relief for the young people to get into the park again. Emma wished they had not seen that grand picture, which had made her uncle so grave all at once ; and she wondered what the mystery could be.

An hour or two later the party were seated in the carriage which had brought them from their home. The evening was calm and fine ; the road was smooth, the horses fresh after their long rest ; and Mr. S. had regained his ordinary composure.

Those who have had much experience—and who of our readers has not had some?—of days of pleasure-

taking, must remember that the evening return home is generally far more quiet and contemplative than the morning's excursion. The animal spirits have been expended, or, at least, subdued ; the pleasure of anticipation is past, and—shall we say it?—some trifling disappointment, or unavailing regret, or latent dissatisfaction, frequently has intervened to damp or to qualify the expected pleasure. Or, if the enjoyment has been undiminished by accident, it has given food for reflection rather than for hilarity.

Thus it was with the young friends of Mr. S., who for some time drove on in silence, broken only by an occasional remark on the beauty of the rich scenery through which they passed, gilded as it was with the rays of the setting sun.

Mr. S. at length spoke. " You have enjoyed your holiday, I hope, young ladies," he said. " I think I can answer for Reginald."

" Yes, very much indeed," said they all.

They had recently escaped from London on a visit to the family of Mr. S., the uncle of one, and the friend of the others of the party ; and it was very pleasant, after being so long " cooped up in the smoky town, to breathe pure country air and to see green fields and trees ! " so Emma said.

" And you think that if you were the owner of W— Hall and park, Emma, that you should be happy ? "

" I would try to be, uncle."

" Do you think that the owner of the Hall is not happy, sir ? " asked another of the young ladies.

" I fear he is not, Miss Graham. I believe that neither Mr. W. nor his lady can be called happy," said Mr. S.

"They are rich, sir, are they not?"

"Very rich, in worldly wealth, I have no doubt. The estate is large and unencumbered; and their income must be almost princely. So far as that is concerned, they have 'all that heart can wish.'"

"I do not know, father," said Reginald; "but I think that if I had a place like that, with plenty of money, and a good horse or two, a few dogs, and a gun, I should try to enjoy myself for a little while, at any rate."

—Reginald had not long left school; and the present object of his youthful ambition was to learn to ride and shoot.—"I should be afraid that Mr. W. is a miser, father," he added.

"Not at all, Reginald. He is rather lavish than niggardly; and though he suffers the Hall to sink into decay, as you may have observed, he spares no expense in keeping up the estate; and his charities to the poor are very large. But, Reginald, do you really think that happiness is indissolubly or necessarily connected with horses, dogs, and guns?"

"No, father; I did not mean that; there are a good many other things wanted to make any one really happy. I only thought just as I spoke, how very nice it would be—and I suppose I was put in mind of guns, and dogs, and shooting, by that last picture we looked at."

"It must be pleasant, at any rate," interposed Miss Graham, "to have a fine house like W—— Hall; and plenty of money. I wonder how it is that we so often hear of the great and rich being unhappy."

"I am not sure, my dear young lady," said Mr. S., "that persons of high station and great wealth are more often afflicted with unhappiness than those in humbler

circumstances. Perhaps it would be found that there is more equality in human happiness than is generally supposed, and that riches have not so much to do either in producing or preventing it as is imagined. There are advantages and disadvantages connected with every state in life, which I suppose pretty equally counterbalance each other ; and that, therefore, the very rich are not, because of that, either more or less happy than those who have only a little of the world's good. We must look for the springs of happiness or unhappiness elsewhere than in the mere possession of riches."

"Is Mr. W. a young man, sir ?" asked the third young lady of the party.

"No ; he has passed the greater part of the journey of life : and has reached the threescore and ten years, beyond which, we are told by an inspired writer that men find 'labour and sorrow.'"

"Perhaps that accounts for his being unhappy, uncle," said Emma ; "and the thought of soon leaving his good things behind him, may spoil his enjoyment of them."

"Ah !" interposed Reginald, with a sigh :—"there is something to be thought of in that : and the more one has, the less he will like the thought of leaving it, of course. As Dr. Johnson said to Garrick, who was very rich and grand,—'It is these things that make a death-bed terrible.'

"There is some truth and some fallacy in that saying, Reginald," said his father, after a moment's thought. "I am not sure that the great moralist, as Dr. Johnson is sometimes styled, had at that time very clear views of what really makes a death-bed terrible. Every death-bed, my dear son, is terrible to an unpardoned and

unsanctified sinner ; and, in general, it will be found, that the penniless pauper, under such awful circumstances, is as unwilling to relinquish his failing hold of life, as the man who, in life, has had the command of almost boundless wealth. And, on the other hand, the dying man who has loved and trusted the Saviour, in life and health, and who can say, ‘ I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day,’ will be as willing to leave a palace behind him as a hovel, because he knows that ‘to depart, and to be with Christ, is far better.’ ”

For a little while all were silent after Mr. S. had said this. Reginald was the first to resume the conversation, by some remarks on the pictures they had seen in the gallery, and the histories they had gleaned from the housekeeper, of the former owners of the Hall.

“ Those histories,” said Mr. S., when another pause occurred, “ which are, I believe, tolerably correct, may tend to show us that there are many obstructions to human happiness in the houses of the rich, as well as of the poor ; to say nothing of the great fact which a gallery of portraits must inevitably bring to mind, that ‘ it is appointed unto men once to die.’ And of that fact we can scarcely fail of being reminded, when we think that of all the faces we have seen on canvass to-day, not one living representative remains. But, to say nothing of this,—the story of the young soldier who was slain in battle ; of his mourning widow, who suffered from the fierce contentions of the times, and at length died of grief ; of her son, who lived only to be a disgrace to his name, and died a hardened profligate, as he had lived ; of the poor mother who sought, but could not

find, comfort in her grief for the death of a favourite child, by moulding its image in wax,—all these tell how many miseries there are which neither position in society, nor wealth, have the power to turn away or assuage.”

“There is one history which we heard nothing about, uncle ;” said Emma, looking inquiringly at Mr. S.

“ You mean that of the last portrait we looked at, Emma. I will satisfy your curiosity. The young sportsman was the son of the present owner of W—— Hall.”

“ Is he then dead, sir ? ” asked the youngest of the party.

“ Yes, my dear. He died nearly thirty years ago ;—only a year or two after that portrait was taken. He was an only son, also ; and I have understood that one—though certainly not the greatest—cause of unhappiness to Mr. W. is, that he has no child to whom his large estate will descend when he is dead ; and that after having been for many hundreds of years regularly transmitted from father to son through many generations, it must now soon revert to a distant and estranged branch of his family. It is very well known that this consideration is a daily source of disquiet to Mr. W. ”

“ If that is why he allows the fine country seat to fall into decay,” said Reginald, “ it seems very much like the fable of the dog in the manger, father. He will not enjoy it himself, and does not like that another should enjoy it after him.”

“ There is another and sadder cause why both Mr. W. and his lady have a shrinking aversion from their country house. The story is not a long one ; and it is a painful one, as you shall judge.

"I have told you," continued Mr. S., "that the young man whose portrait we saw was an only son; and I need scarcely say that, as a child, he was very greatly indulged. Unhappily, he was naturally self-willed, and had strong passions, which required wise and discriminating judgment, as well as strong parental authority, to control. It is not harsh or uncharitable to say that, during the earlier part of the boy's life, neither judgment nor authority was exercised over him; and Henry W. became a self-willed, and proud young man.

"He had better qualities. He was affectionate; and as ardent where his affections were fixed, as he was determined to carry out his own purposes when they were hastily formed. He was clever, also; and if it had not been for the overwhelming torrent of his unbridled will—which, when he was in any degree opposed, blazed up into temporary fury—he might have been not only happy and useful, but honoured and distinguished.

"There was one supreme deficiency in his education—in his *home* education, at least,—from first to last. His father was not only essentially a man of the world, but a scoffer at the religion of the Bible:—alas! he is said to be so still. Sorrow has hardened his heart against the gospel, rather than softened it:—so I have been told by one who has the means of judging, and who would not judge hastily or uncharitably. The mother of Henry W. was gay and frivolous, and as averse to religion as her husband. She once dismissed a nurse-maid in anger, who had ventured to say a few words to the child about eternity and God. And all that the boy heard on the subject of religion, was in

sneers at the Bible, and in malicious, or heartless ridicule of the followers of Christ. He grew up, therefore, without the safeguard even of an intelligent comprehension of the claims of God and the mercy of a Redeemer.

"After a desultory education at home under a tutor of his father's own infidel sentiments, young W. went to college, where he unhappily met with other young men who had as little regard for moral proprieties as himself, and by whom it is to be feared, he was led into 'almost all evil.' At home he had had some sort of innate perception of what was due from himself, as a gentleman, to others; and this, with the natural generosity of his disposition, had partially concealed the mischief which was going on in his soul. But now this was laid bare, and he soon became the ringleader in open and undisguised vice. Eventually, he was expelled from college in disgrace.

"His father had not calculated on this, though it was the natural result of the poisonous principles which he himself had instilled into the mind of the boy. He was not prepared, either, for the heavy demands upon his purse for the tradesmen's bills and debts of honour, falsely so called, of his son. Mr. W., like his son, was a man of violent passions; and the scene, as I have been told, when the disgraced young man returned to W—— Hall, was most distressing;—the father, greatly enraged, gave expression to his wrath in dreadful imprecations; the mother, in an agony of tears, vainly endeavoured to calm down the husband's anger; and Henry retorted his father's words in unfilial reproaches.

"This passed over, however; the father relented

and was reconciled to his son, who thenceforward commenced a life of idle dissipation and wretched profligacy at home, in which course he had not far to seek for vile panderers and companions.

"And then was seen, in full fructification, the result of the utter want of moral and religious training which had marked the education of the boy. It was seen then how emphatically true are the words of Divine inspiration,—'A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.' W—— Hall became a miserable habitation.

"You said just now, Reginald, or implied, that horses, dogs, and guns are, in your opinion, accessories to happiness; and you, my dear young friends, seemed to think that with wealth at command, a person must needs have happiness, to some extent, in his own power. Well, there was wealth at W—— Hall in abundance, Miss Graham; a beautiful country estate, Emma; and horses, dogs, and guns, Reginald. There was youth, too, for even the parents had scarcely passed what is called middle age, and there was health to enjoy the bounties of Providence. But if I had been asked, at that time, to point out the most unhappy residence within the circle of my knowledge, I should unhesitatingly have mentioned W—— Hall; and I knew much of the Hall then, for business often called me there.

"We may depend upon it," continued Mr. S., "that there are no families in this world so essentially miserable as those, whatever may be their worldly advantages, from which the fear of God is systematically excluded. And one of the most astounding assertions which I ever heard, is that which I lately have heard, namely, that the believer in Christ has not so much

happiness in the world, and need not expect to have so much, as the unbeliever. Such a statement is alike contrary to God's own word and to the teachings of experience, and is a gross libel on Christianity itself.

"But I will go on with my story. Henry W. had been at home some two or three years, when his father discovered that he was on the eve of being married. The young person to whom Henry had secretly engaged himself was, in many respects, unsuitable to become his wife; but had she been in every other respect unexceptionable, the secrecy with which the affair had been conducted was justly offensive to Mr. W., and his anger was once more roused against his son.

"It happened that when the discovery was made, Henry was on the point of starting on a shooting excursion, and he was whistling for his dogs when the voice of his father, loud and stormy, called him into the picture-gallery. What passed there was never distinctly known; but the tones of the voices of father and son, in fierce contention, were heard by a servant as he passed the door. Soon afterwards, the unhappy young man rushed from the gallery, his countenance crimson with rage, and hastily passing through the entrance hall, he snatched up his gun and left the house.

"Hours passed away, and he did not return; and meanwhile, his father took horse, and rode off to the residence of the young lady's father, which he reached in a fearful passion. High words passed between the two gentlemen, which probably would have led to a hostile meeting, if another event in that eventful day had not effectually turned all thoughts into another channel.

"Henry did not return to dinner; but towards night a messenger arrived at the Hall in breathless haste and agitation. The young man had been found in one of his father's preserves mortally wounded, his discharged gun lying by his side; and he had been conveyed thence to a near cottage.

"I need not attempt to describe the scene which ensued—the mother's agony, the father's horror. It was at first believed that the unhappy young man was the victim of his own strong, uncontrolled passions. In one sense, this was true, for his impetuosity in rushing onward through brake and brier with his gun at full cock, while his temper was boiling over with anger against his father, had led to the fatal accident; but it was not an act of intentional self-murder.

"He was brought home, and lingered some days in dreadful agony before he died: and, in those days, it was said that he bitterly reproached himself for past follies and sins, and turned to the Bible for instruction and support in a dying hour. But not much of all that passed within his chamber was ever known, and of what passed within his soul nothing can truly be known till the day when all secrets shall be revealed.

"He died,—penitently it was said; but you will no longer wonder that, from that time, W— Hall has become hateful to the unhappy parents. There was a sumptuous funeral; and that was no sooner over than the owner of the Hall and the grief-stricken mother hastened frantically to London, declaring that they would never return to the scene of their terrible affliction. For many years they adhered to their vow, and were only occasionally heard of as travelling from place

to place, and country to country, ‘seeking’—to use the impressive words of Scripture—‘seeking rest and finding none.’ Meanwhile the Hall gradually sank into the state of neglect in which we have to-day seen it. Two or three servants were left to take charge of the house; the principal rooms were closed; and the portrait of the ill-fated young man was covered up as you have witnessed.

“Ten years passed away, and then, impelled by some strong impulse, as was said, but rather, I believe, from finding that, wherever they roamed, they carried with them the canker which was preying on their hearts, the W.’s revisited the Hall. To have seen the ravages which that comparatively short time had wrought in them would have moved their bitterest enemies to compassion. They were prematurely aged, grey, bent down, and worn with constant sorrow: that ‘sorrow of the world’ which ‘worketh death.’ It was soon known, also, that, in addition to this, their domestic existence was embittered by constant mutual reproaches and increasing alienation. They were miserable.

“They had miscalculated their strength of endurance also. The remembrance of the tragic history of their dead son was revived, and they became wild with renewed grief. They passed only a day and a night at the Hall, and hurried away again; and several more years elapsed before they repeated the experiment. Then, by a strong effort, they once more returned; and since then have made an annual pilgrimage to the spot, and have so far succeeded in subduing their emotions as to hide, in some measure, the gnawing agony which they feel; but I sometimes have thought, when I have,

at these seasons, been brought into contact with Mr. W., of the lines of one who was perhaps equally unhappy, when, after describing the tortures of ‘a scorpion girt with fire,’ he adds,—

‘ So writhes the heart remorse hath riven,
 Unfit for earth, undoom’d for heaven,
Darkness above, despair beneath,
 Around it flame—within it death.’ ”

“ This is a melancholy story, sir ! ” said Miss Graham, when Mr. S. at length came to the end. And so they all said ; Reginald adding that he could almost have wished that his father had not finished their day’s excursion by making them all look so grave and feel so sad.

“ I would not willingly damp your day’s pleasure, my young friends, and my dear boy,” said Mr. S. “ if I did not hope, by a slight check to your gaiety, to give some lasting instruction. You know where it is said that ‘ it is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting ; for that is the end of all men ; and the living will lay it to heart.’ And the wise man adds, if you remember, ‘ Sorrow is better than laughter : for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.’ *

“ I like these occasional trips of pleasure,” continued Mr. S. ; “ and have no sympathy with some good people who are apt to think of them as a sad waste of time and money too. I do not think that either the time or the money they cost need be wasted. The very change of scene is useful to recruit both body and mind ; and there is no place we can visit so devoid of materials for

* Eccles. vii. 2, 3.

self-improvement as not to yield it in rich abundance to those who are willing to receive it.

"We have seen to-day, for instance, how powerless wealth is, to ward off even the ordinary casualties of human life ; and this should surely teach us, that 'every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain : he heapeth up riches and knoweth not who shall gather them.'* And thus we may learn also, that

'He builds too low, who builds beneath the skies.'

"We have seen, moreover, something of the transitory nature of the fashions of this world. It is true, we may see this every day, and everywhere ; but the same lesson which, under ordinary aspects, fails to impress us, may do so when it is presented to us in an extraordinary light. And dull indeed should we be, not to profit by this lesson :—a lesson which an apostle teaches us when he says,—'But this I say, brethren, the time is short : it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as not abusing it : for the fashion of this world passeth away.'†

"Then in the melancholy history I have given you, I think we have an exemplification of the Divine declaration, that 'it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.'‡ How much misery would have been averted and avoided if poor Henry W. had learned as a boy, filial submission and self-control !

"And, not to make my moral application tedious, we

* Psa. xxxix. 6. † 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. ‡ Lam. iii. 27.

may sum up our reflections by thinking what a wretched condition it is to be living without God in the world ; without a guide in perplexity ; consolation in sorrow ; and hope in death ;—while, on the other hand, the more we see of men, the more we learn of their private histories, and the more we search into their secret sources of disquiet, the stronger will be the confirmation to our own minds of the broad and comprehensive statement of God's own word, that—‘Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.’”*

As Mr. S. finished speaking, the carriage drove up to the door of his quiet, retired, and pleasant home. Twilight was setting in, and the bright fire in the small drawing-room shone cheerily on the party as they entered.

“ Ah ! ” said Reginald, rubbing his hands, which had become chilled with the evening air, and looking thoughtfully around him : “ I do not know, cousin Emma, but I have a strong impression that this is a pleasanter place, *somewhere*, than W—— Hall ! ”

* 1 Tim. iv. 8.

PALESTINE.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

BLESS'D land of Judæa ! thrice hallow'd of song,
Where the holiest of memories pilgrim-like throng ;
In the shade of thy palms, by the shores of thy sea,
On the hills of thy beauty, my heart is with thee.

With the eye of a spirit I look on that shore,
Where pilgrim and prophet have linger'd before ;
With the glide of a spirit I traverse the sod
Made bright by the steps of the angels of God.

Blue sea of the hills ! in my spirit I hear
Thy waters, Gennesaret, chime on my ear ;
Where the Lowly and Just with the people sat down,
And thy spray on the dust of his sandals was thrown.

Beyond are Bethulia's mountains of green,
And the desolate hills of the wild Gadarene ;
And I pause on the goat-crags of Tabor to see
The gleam of thy waters, O dark Galilee !

Hark, a sound in the valley ! where, swollen and strong,
Thy river, O Kishon, is sweeping along ;
Where the Canaanite strove with Jehovah in vain,
And thy torrent grew dark with the blood of the slain.

There, down from his mountains stern Zebulon came,
And Naphtali's stag, with his eyeballs of flame,
And the chariots of Jabin roll'd harmlessly on,
For the arm of the Lord was Abinoam's son !

There sleep the still rocks and the caverns which rang
To the song which the beautiful prophetess sang,
When the princes of Issachar stood by her side,
And the shout of a host in its triumph replied.

Lo, Bethlehem's hill-side before me is seen,
With the mountains around and the valleys between ;
There rested the shepherds of Judah, and there
The song of the angels rose sweet on the air.

And Bethany's palm-trees in beauty still throw
Their shadows at noon on the ruins below ;
But where are the sisters who hasten'd to greet
The lowly Redeemer, and sit at his feet ?

I tread where the twelve in their wayfaring trod :
I stand where they stood with the chosen of God—
Where his blessings were heard and his lessons were
taught,
Where the blind were restored and the healing was
wrought.

Oh, here with his flock the sad Wanderer came—
These hills he toil'd over in grief are the same—
The founts where he drank by the wayside still flow,
And the same airs are blowing which breathed on his
brow.

And throned on her hills sits Jerusalem yet,
 But the dust on her forehead, and chains on her feet ;
 For the crown of her pride to the mocker hath gone,
 And the holy shekinah is dark where it shone.

But wherefore this dream of the earthly abode
 Of humanity clothed in the brightness of God ?
 Were my spirit but turn'd from the outward and dim,
 It would gaze even now on the presence of him !

Not in clouds and in terrors, but gentle as when,
 In love and in meekness, he moved among men :
 And the voice which breathed peace to the waves of
 the sea,
 In the hush of my spirit would whisper to me !

And what if my feet may not tread where he stood,
 Nor my ears hear the dashing of Galilee's flood,
 Nor my eyes see the cross which he bow'd him to bear,
 Nor my knees press Gethsemane's garden in prayer :

Yet, Loved of the Father, thy Spirit is near
 To the meek, and the lowly, and penitent here ;
 And the voice of thy love is the same even now,
 As at Bethany's tomb, or on Olivet's brow.

Oh, the outward hath gone !—but, in glory and power,
 The Spirit surviveth the things of an hour :
 Unchanged, undecaying, its Pentecost flame
 On the heart's secret altar is burning the same.

SYRIAN FLOWERS.

MANY of the flowers and plants of Syria possess an additional interest from the references made to them in the Holy Scriptures, as illustrations of the power, wisdom, and goodness of their Creator; or as they are employed as emblems of spiritual and heavenly things. Of some of these a bouquet has been made.

The CISTUS (*Cistus ladaniferus*) is the rose of Scripture. It grows abundantly on the plains of Judaea. The flower is white, prettily adorned with a yellow and crimson centre. Early in the morning the branches exude an odorous and medicinal gum, well known as the myrrh of ancient times.

The DAMASK ROSE (*Rosa Damascena*) has been called “the queen of the garden.” It is of the true rose-colour. The rose-bearing shrubs in western countries, beautiful as they are, cannot vie with the rose-tree of the East, which is sometimes twelve or fourteen feet high, and is laden with thousands of flowers, filling the air around with the most delicious fragrance. The gardens of Damascus are noted for this species, which was brought from the East to England in the year 1573.

The SAFFRON CROCUS (*Crocus Susianus*) grows wild in Syria, and bears a violet-coloured flower with yellow stamens.



SYRIAN

A fragrant kind of narcissus is called the GREAT JONQUIL (*Narcissus jonquilla*). It is of a bright yellow tint, and it scatters its odour in the evening in Palestine, where it is held in great repute.

The CAPER (*Capparis spinosa*) is a pretty little plant with glossy green leaves, found in crevices and in rough and stony places about Aleppo ; also, hanging among the tombs near Jerusalem, and blossoming about the pool of Siloam. Its flower is of a blue colour.

The TARE common in England is the *Eruvum hirsutum*, which bears small blue flowers. It is also well known to the people of the East as a troublesome weed in the corn-fields. The farmer does not separate the weed from the wheat, but lets both grow together till the harvest. The reapers then carry both wheat and tares to the threshing-floor, when the latter are driven out by means of a sieve or fan. Matt. xiii. 24—30; iii. 12. Some suppose the plant *darnel*, which bears a resemblance to wheat, is the tare of Scripture.

The MARTAGON LILY (*Lilium Chalcedonicum*) is supposed to be the flower to which our Lord referred when teaching his disciples to depend on the paternal care of Divine Providence. Matt. vi. 28. It is of a bright scarlet colour ; its size is about half that of the common tiger lily. It is most abundant in the region of Galilee.

“ Flowers ! when the Saviour’s calm, benignant eye
Fell on your gentle beauty : when from you
That heavenly lesson for all hearts he drew,
Eternal, universal as the sky ;
Then in the bosom of your purity
A voice he set, as in a temple shrine,

That life's quick travellers ne'er might pass you by,
Unwarn'd of that sweet oracle divine.
And though too oft its low celestial sound
By the harsh notes of work-day care is drown'd,
And the loud steps of vain, unlistening haste,
Yet the great ocean hath no tone of power
Mightier to reach the soul, in thought's hush'd hour,
Than yours, meek lilies ! chosen thus and graced."

HEMANS.

OUR ANNIE'S MISSION.

TWENTY years ago, in a lovely little cottage which stood on rising and fertile ground, not far from the pleasant and secluded town of L——, there dwelt an elderly widow lady of the name of Mackenzie, and her only daughter Frances. Frances Mackenzie—then in the days of early womanhood—was a pale, sickly-looking girl, who had never known by experience that buoyancy and elasticity of spirit which is so natural to youth. She had been lame from infancy ; and her health was always delicate. It was perhaps from these reasons that she was peculiarly timid and retiring in her manners, and shrank as much as possible from general observation.

What a contrast there was between this fair-haired, quiet daughter, and her high-spirited, energetic, warm-tempered mother ! The latter had been, and was still, a very handsome woman ; she was tall, and exceedingly dignified in her personal appearance ; pleasant and winning in her deportment, but of a disposition that could not brook the least familiarity, or bear the slightest opposition.

That lady was my mother : and that sickly daughter was myself. Yes, we lived together, as we had always done since I could remember, in that pretty ivy-covered cottage ; and a very happy home it was to me. For

my mother, with all her reserve towards others, was ever kind and gentle to me. She watched over me with the tenderest solicitude, and grudged no expense nor painstaking for the promotion of my health and comfort. And we loved each other perhaps all the more because we had only each other to love.

Stay—I must recall that, for it is not altogether correct. There was an absent one from our home and hearth, dear, very dear to us both ; but the love which we felt for him was in the one case a love which dared not manifest itself; and in the other a love which was kept down, nay almost stifled out of its existence by the force of pride. Why was this?

William Mackenzie, my wandering, and often-wept-for brother, left us in a moment of passionate anger, and we looked in vain for his return. My mother and he had one evening a long and violent dispute about some money transactions in which he had been engaged. There was an unaccountable deficiency in the amount ; she accused William—and there seemed ground for the accusation—of having used the missing sum for himself ; and her charge was made with harsh words, and bitter reproofs. Irritated by her language, and too proud to plead for, when he could not clear himself, William retorted with equal vehemence and sarcasm ; and the contest ran so high, that at length my mother desired him to leave her presence, and not to return to it till he was ready to own his fault and apologize for his behaviour. They parted thus in anger and in pride; unforgiving and unreconciled. Alas, alas, that there should have been this unseemly strife between a mother and her child !

The morning came, a bright and sunny morning, cheering the earth, and lighting up creation with smiles of gladness : but there was a dark shadow on our home, and a thick gloom upon our spirits. For William's seat was vacant at our table, and his voice was silent in our dwelling. A hastily pencilled note told the reason of his departure. It bore these words :—“I go, mother, at your bidding ; for to meet again upon your terms is impossible ; and if there is any satisfaction in knowing that you have driven your son from his home to seek his fortune amongst strangers in a distant land, that satisfaction is yours. Some day, perhaps, you will be inclined to treat me with the justice which I deserve—till then—farewell.”

The colour faded from my mother's cheek as she read these lines, but she betrayed no other sign of emotion ; and calmly observed, as she folded the paper, that the threat of going abroad was merely held out for the purpose of intimidating her ; and that the foolish boy would soon be glad to come back again. I believe she thought so then. Would that she had been right ! But day after day passed away, and William returned not.

We gained through a relative some tidings of his movements. He was then on the eve of embarkation for America or Australia. One kind and forgiving word from my mother would have arrested the wanderer, and have restored him to his place in our family, but that one word my mother refused to utter. It was the child's place, not the parent's, she said, to give way. It was in vain that I implored her, for my sake, to yield ; it was in vain that friends interceded for my brother ; it was in vain that our worthy clergyman reasoned with her, and

warned her of the consequences of her conduct ; my mother was as firm as a rock against all our entreaties and persuasions ; and William departed without one kind wish, or parting token from his offended parent. His only communication with us was to send me a lock of his hair in a small gold brooch, which I kept in my drawer to look at, for I dared not wear it nor yet show it to my mother. And thus we were separated, not knowing that we should ever meet again. And this verse powerfully pressed itself upon my attention, and caused me many sad forebodings,—“Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him : but weep sore for him that goeth away : for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.” Jer. xxii. 10.

From that period my mother forbade the mention of William’s name in her presence. She wished, she said, to forget that she had such a disobedient and ungrateful son ; and she never desired to hear of him again, unless he were humbled and penitent for his fault. I was therefore obliged to refrain from all allusions to my poor unhappy brother before her ; but I was thankful that my mother could not control my thoughts nor yet my prayers ; so that I could still cherish the absent brother in my memory, and bear him on the petitions which I offered at the throne of grace. Oh, how often and how fervently I prayed for him, and for my mother ! beseeching with many tears that they might be reconciled and restored to each other ; but though I waited, and had long patience for it, the answer did not come.

Years, dull, sorrowful years, rolled away, and William was to us as a stranger. We knew not where he was, nor what he was doing ; nor, indeed, whether he were

still living. This uncertainty and suspense tried me very much. I pictured him to myself in all sorts of painful situations, and then shuddered at my own imaginings. I formed terrible ideas respecting his fate, and then had not power to banish them from my thoughts ; they haunted me night and day ; and I often woke from uneasy and feverish dreams, to find my pillow wet with my tears. It is true that the lapse of time gradually soothed my grief, but the wound was too deep to be thoroughly healed ; it was merely surface-closed ; and a careless remark could probe it to the quick, and the sudden touch of some forgotten memory make it bleed afresh. For I loved my brother with that intensity of affection which a fragile and sensitive sister feels for one who has been her companion, and friend, and protector from earliest childhood.

It would have been a great relief to me, could I have unbosomed my heart to my mother, and have shared my sadness with her. But my lips were sealed upon this subject ; for, fondly as I loved my mother, there was an authority, and, at times, severity in her manner, which repressed any open violation of her will. I could not tell what her feelings were respecting her son. She never appeared to miss him in any way, nor to regret his absence ; if she did, she was too proud to show it.

I remember once reading to her that beautiful incident from Scripture of Christ raising the widow's son. It was my usual custom to read the Bible aloud to her every morning ; and on that occasion I purposely chose the chapter containing this account, in the hope that its narrative might touch her feelings. When I came to these words, "the only son of his mother, and

she was a widow," which I repeated with marked and plaintive emphasis, I paused for a minute; indeed I was obliged to do so, for my eyes were dimmed with tears. But there was no responsive emotion on my mother's part. With a perfectly unmoved expression of countenance, she looked up when I stopped reading, and then, observing that the sun's rays came full in the direction of my seat, and rested upon my book, she rose and quietly drew down the venetian blind. I was sadly disappointed at this failure of my little plan; and doubted from that time the possibility of any impression being ever made upon my mother's heart.

And thus, as I said before, some years passed away, without any change at home, or any tidings of my brother. But at length an event occurred which was fraught to us with strange and unexpected blessing. How my heart thrills with joy as I think of it!

It was towards the close of an unusually hot summer, that my mother and I went for change of air to a pretty little watering-place on the western coast. Our stay there was drawing towards a close; when one morning at breakfast-time, after an unusually stormy night, the mistress of the house where we lodged came in, with a face full of importance and concern, to tell us of a terrible shipwreck which had occurred a few miles off, just at break of day, and in which all on board, with the exception of two seamen, had perished. We were, of course, a good deal affected by this sad information, and asked many questions respecting the vessel, the port to which it was bound, the number of its passengers, and the supposed cause of its fearful destruction; but not having any personal interest in its fate, and not being

situated amongst those who were, the thought of it soon passed away from our immediate recollection. We little imagined then that there was aught connected with it which could in any way concern ourselves; and yet, one was saved from that sudden wreck to become the messenger of mercy to our divided and unhappy family.

On the eve of our departure from G——; I speak literally, for it was the last evening which we purposed spending there; my mother and I were returning from a lengthened walk, when we all at once perceived the figure of a slender and delicate-looking young woman resting against the sloping bank which bordered our pathway. Her eyes were shut, her lips were parched and open, and her whole face was flushed and feverish. Beside her stood, or rather knelt, a tiny, flaxen-haired little creature of some three or four summers old, in great apparent distress. Wondering who they were, and what was the matter, we quickened our steps towards them, and by a gentle inquiry, and indeed by a nearer glance, soon discovered that our aid was directly needed; for the stranger was evidently exceedingly ill, and scarcely conscious. My mother suggested that I should hasten home—our lodging was close by—and get Betsy, our servant girl, to come back with me. I did so; and then Betsy and my mother supported the young woman between them, and led her in-doors; whilst I carried the little cherub-looking child in my arms, and wiped away the tears from her fair round checks. When laid upon the sofa, and after taking some refreshing cordial, the stranger revived a little, and was able to give us some account of herself.

We found, to our great surprise, that she and her child had been passengers in the lately wrecked vessel. With her little one tightly clasped in her arms the terror-stricken mother had been kept afloat by a piece of wood, to which she had been fastened by a kind-hearted sailor, and in that state, after drifting some distance, was picked up by a small fishing vessel, and thus providentially saved. Some benevolent individuals, upon hearing her story, had raised a sum of money to enable her to proceed to her friends, for all that she had brought with her was buried in the ocean. She had travelled many miles that day by coach; her anxiety not suffering her to rest, although she felt very unwell; and she was on her way to the office in G——, that she might be ready to start by the next conveyance, and thus not lose any time, when a sudden prostration of strength and painful sensations in her head, made her sink down, quite overcome, by the wayside.

There was something very pleasing and lady-like in her manner, and we felt greatly interested in her. As she appeared to get worse rather than better, we sent without delay for a doctor. When he came and saw her, he said that she was in a very high fever, and must go directly to bed. Now many, perhaps most, persons in our circumstances would have sent her away to the hospital; but my mother was of a generous and impulsive disposition, and she quickly arranged, with our landlady's consent, to supply the destitute stranger with a lodging and attendance. I think my mother fancied there was a resemblance between the poor invalid and myself; and this won her sympathy more

than anything else would have done ; and I must own that our complexions, the colour of our hair and eyes, and the general delicacy of our appearance, justified in some measure her opinion.

So a temporary home was thus unexpectedly provided for the sick mother and her little child. Ah, in that busy moment of gratified benevolence, we had not the least idea that the weary and storm-tossed traveller had reached the last earthly resting-place she would need, with the exception of a quiet grave. But so in God's all-wise and mysterious providence it was ; for in a few hours an alarming brain-fever developed itself, which rapidly dried up all the springs of life, and terminated in little more than a week the chequered existence of the young mother. It was a solemn and melancholy event, and as I write the tears are falling on my paper at the recollection of it. It seemed strange, nay, even hard to me then, that she should have been snatched in so remarkable a manner from a watery death, merely to end her days beneath a stranger's roof, and to have her eyes closed by a stranger's hands ; but I trust I have now learned that God's dealings cannot always be understood at the time, and that we must be content to wait for the solution of many of our difficulties in the clearer light of eternity : "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

Only one or two intervals of consciousness intervened throughout that mournful illness. In them we gathered that she had left a husband behind her, who purposed coming over by the next vessel ; and that her little girl was her first and only child. This was all we

could learn ; for delirium and stupor hindered all other communications, save that with her dying lips she expressed her perfect confidence as an unworthy sinner in a complete and loving Saviour, and rejoiced in the hope of soon being with him. Her last act of consciousness was to make signs for her child to be brought to her ; but before it could be placed in her arms her spirit had gently departed, and her babe was motherless.

And now I come to the more important part of my story,—the mission which that little one accomplished among us. My mother's heart was, from the first, strongly attracted towards the child, and she seemed to feel, from the peculiar way in which it had been introduced and was now left in our family, that it was specially intrusted to our care ; and although she deemed it her duty to endeavour, by advertizing and every other means to restore the child to her friends, I know she earnestly wished, and I am sure I did the same, that we might be permitted to keep her and to bring her up as our own. She was a most lovely and engaging little creature, and entwined herself closely around our affections. Her grief, too, for the loss of her mother, (for I have never seen in so young a child such strength and sensitiveness of feeling,) endeared her to us still more ; and when she found herself bereft and alone, she clung to my mother and myself with such tenacity and tenderness as if she dreaded another separation.

As may be readily inferred, our wish respecting this dear child was granted ; for although all proper and possible inquiries were made for her unknown relatives, no one appeared to claim her, or to give us the slightest

information about her. And it was very little that we could gain from herself. Her name, she said, was Annie May; and she had a papa once as well as a mamma, but where he lived and what he did she could not tell us; and we were forced to rest satisfied with our present ignorance, in the hope that some day we might learn more of the history of our little adopted one. She was very baby-like, both in her appearance and her manners; and the scenes which she passed through during the night of that awful shipwreck had made so deep an impression on her mind, that we thought it might have obliterated some of her earlier recollections. The initials "A. M." which were marked on her own and on her mother's articles of dress, as well as the beautifully written characters of "*Annie May*," traced on the fly-leaf of a well-used but richly-bound copy of the Scriptures—almost the only relic saved from the vessel—attested the truthfulness and identity of their names; and the simple tombstone which was raised by subscription to the memory of the unfortunate stranger, bore, therefore, the inscription of "*Annie May*."

We stayed at G—— until we had seen it placed over her lowly grave, and then we returned with our precious charge to our own beloved home. Sweet little Annie! I think I can see her now, with her soft curls clustering on her high forehead, and her pale complexion contrasting well with the hue of her mourning dress. Her gentle, loving disposition rendered the management of her a pleasant and an easy undertaking; and her lively prattle was very amusing to two quiet retired people like my mother and myself. But it was the frequent serious-

ness of her thoughts and expressions which was the most striking feature in this little one's character. She had evidently been nurtured by godly parents, and their loving counsels had dropped into good soil; for she showed a tender anxiety to avoid everything that was wrong, and it seemed as natural to her to speak about Jesus and heaven as about her dolls and her playthings. How pretty she used to look as she knelt at her morning and evening prayers! And when she repeated, as she always did, this simple petition, "Oh Lord, help me to love thee, and to love everybody!" I felt that her childlike prayer had been already answered, for her little heart seemed full of love to all around her. We became fonder of her every day. She was like a bright ray of sunshine, sent to cheer our dwelling and to beguile our cares.

It was surprising to see the influence which she insensibly exerted over my dignified and unbending mother. She said to her things which no one else would have dared to say, and asked questions which no one else would have dreamed of putting; and she was answered with smiles, and encouraged by caresses. I have often remarked that elderly ladies are foolishly indulgent towards little children; and I really think that Annie would have been quite spoiled by my mother had she not possessed one of those dispositions that *will not* spoil, for my mother was ready to give her everything that she wanted, and was never better satisfied than when she was inventing for her some fresh pleasure.

Many months glided on, and if our darling Annie grew in loveliness and every feminine grace, so did my

mother in patience and forbearance. I was astonished at the softening power which the winning ways and words of that little one had over my mother's heart and feelings. There is something irresistibly persuasive in a child's unaffected piety; and my mother, who had listened to the best of preachers comparatively unimpressed, was unable to withstand the force of Annie's sweet example and guileless conversation. Ah, the Saviour had taken a little child and placed her in our midst; and my mother was silently learning lessons of holiness and love from that infant teacher. How I love to look back to one peaceful Sunday evening, which stands out from amongst the rest by its happy and hallowed associations! A severe headache confined me to my couch in the back parlour, and my mother and little Annie settled themselves in the front room, in order that I might not be disturbed by their occasional remarks and the rustling of their book-leaves. After a time, Annie began to talk to my mother about the book which she had been reading. It was the history of Joseph, written in very easy words, and adorned with gay-coloured pictures; and her childish and original comments upon it aroused my attention and interested me not a little.

She spoke in a low tone, for they thought I was asleep; but the wind coming through their window in the direction of my sofa brought every word to me as distinctly as if I had been close to them.

"I like that part best," said Annie, "where Joseph forgives his brothers, and makes them all so happy."

"Yes; it shows that he was a good man," observed

my mother, "because it is very difficult to be kind to those who have been unkind to us."

"I don't think Joseph found it hard," said Annie, "because, you see, he loved them so much that he could not wait a minute longer before he told them who he was."

"And if you had been in Joseph's place, would you have done as he did?" asked my mother.

"Yes," said the child, half-surprised at the question; "it is so nice to forgive anybody."

"Did you ever forgive anybody, Annie?"

"Once," said the child promptly.

"Who was it?"

"It was Clara,"—Clara was our clergyman's little girl and Annie's chief playfellow. "She broke the handle off my doll's china mug, and she was not a bit sorry for it; and I was very angry with her, and I wouldn't play with her any more. I hadn't forgiven her then. But when I went to bed and began to say my prayers, I couldn't go on, I was obliged to stop."

"Why?"

"Because how could I say, 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us,' when I hadn't forgiven Clara?"

There was a slight pause. "You understood, then, what the words mean, Annie?"

"Oh yes; Clara's papa has taught her, and Alfred, and me, all about the Lord's prayer."

"What did you do then?"

"After I got into bed, I forgave Clara in my heart, and then I said my prayer right through, and I felt quite happy! I told Clara about it the next time I saw

her, and she cried, and said she was very sorry ; and then we kissed each other and made it all up,"

"And suppose, Annie, that you had not forgiven Clara ?"

"Oh, I don't think I could have gone to sleep," said Annie, "because I might have died in the night ; and you know what Jesus says in the parable of the servants."

"Well, tell me what it is, Annie."

"I know the text, because I learned it in my little book," said the child ; and she repeated with reverent slowness those solemn words, "' And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.' Matt. xviii. 34, 35."

A long silence followed. Annie had got another picture-book and was absorbed in its contents : and as I raised myself up and peeped through the chink of the door, I saw that my mother was sitting in deep thoughtfulness, with her half-closed Bible resting on her knee, and that presently she raised her hand to wipe away an unbidden tear or two that trickled down her cheek. Ah, little Annie, your mission was a blessed one ! Well might our Saviour say, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." As for myself, all that I could do was to lie still upon the sofa, and while thanking God for the unconscious teaching of that simple child, implore that his Spirit might accompany it with his own blessing. And can I doubt that he did do so ? Nay, the tokens which he vouchsafed were too unequivocal in their nature

to allow of a shade of distrust. For after that memorable Sunday, I could discern a more marked change in my mother's bearing. There was a quietness, a sorrowfulness, and at times a humility in her demeanour, which indicated something unusual going on within. I hoped, and prayed, and rejoiced with trembling.

One clouded morning in October, I stood with pensive feelings at the parlour window. The ground was strewed with faded leaves, and every fresh breeze wafted an addition to their numbers ; the sky looked dull ; the wind moaned at intervals ; and there was a cheerlessness in the whole scene which accorded with the depressed and saddened state of my feelings. For it was William's birthday ; and how could I think of my brother, and be glad ? As I brooded over the past, my emotion became uncontrollable, and leaning my head against the window-frame, I exclaimed aloud, " Oh, William, William, my brother, my brother ! would that you were here ! "

I believed that I was alone, but the next minute a deep sob broke upon the silence ; and turning hastily round, I perceived my mother sitting in her arm-chair in the corner, with her face buried in her handkerchief. In a moment I was at her side. " Mother, *dear* mother !" I said softly. She looked up, and murmuring, " Oh, Frances, my poor boy !" she folded me tenderly in her arms, and we mingled our tears together over the lost and loved one.

It was a long time before my mother was calm enough to speak ; but when she did open her lips, how touching and yet how comforting was the recital which they breathed. The barrier of her natural reserve, once

thrown down, my mother opened her heart freely to me. She told me how through pride she had so long steeled her feelings against her son ; and also how, through the influence of the same besetting sin, she had concealed from every one the unconquerable desire which she had sometimes felt to behold him once more, and had determined to carry her unforgiving spirit with her to the grave. And yet, this “ strong man armed,” whom no force of argument, nor plea of affection had been allowed to dislodge, was effectually conquered and expelled by the Saviour’s gentle voice speaking to her through the ministry of a little child. Yes, my mother meekly owned that Annie’s lovely conduct and artless words, had formed the channel through which God’s recovering grace had visited her closed-up heart, and thawed the ice-bound stream of her affections. Who could help realizing in such a confession the reality of this great truth, that God’s ways are not as our ways, neither are his thoughts as our thoughts ? It pleases him oftentimes to work by the simplest means and the most unlikely instrumentality ; surely it becomes creatures like us to admire his wisdom, and to praise his goodness. And if any one ever felt grateful, certainly I did then, for my heart was overflowing with thankfulness.

Yet sorrow blended with my joy ; sorrow that my brother was absent from us ; and sorrow on account of the painful self-reproach which my mother could not but experience. For repentance cannot undo the past ; nor even a sense of the Divine forgiveness enable the contrite to forgive themselves. Sin is indeed a “ bitter ” as well as an “ evil ” thing ; and though it may be

forsaken and deplored, its consequences will often follow us through life.

Still, after all, we were happy ; happier than we had ever been since the day of William's departure ; for was there not perfect confidence and sympathy upon the dearest of all earthly points established between my mother and myself ? And was there not the animating hope that the son who was lost might be found ; that the exile might be restored to his home, to cheer and to sustain us in our future course ?

But when weeks faded into months, and the banished one returned not, nor the most unwearied and ingenious researches brought us the least information concerning him, do you wonder that our spirits sometimes fainted within us, and that we feared our beloved William was no longer in the land of the living ?

Nor was that suspense all that we had to bear. It wanted but one drop to make my mother's cup of grief overflow, and that drop was poured into it. By the unexpected confession of one in whom she formerly trusted, and who was then on his death-bed, she learned that it was he who had abstracted the missing sum of money which she had accused her own son of taking. Oh, the anguish which that proof of William's innocence kindled in my mother's breast ! It was heart-rending to hear her self-accusations, and her lamentations over the past. And after the tumultuous heavings of her passionate grief subsided, how deep was her regret, how lowly her self-abasement ! and she said, in the language of one who had trodden the path of sorrow before her, "I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul." Ah ! we should never let go our grasp of this

precious assurance, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin ;" but at the same time it is well to remember, that the earthly results of transgression often cannot be remedied, and may become to us the sources of the heaviest trial.

Nevertheless, the trying discipline through which my mother passed, was no doubt eminently sanctified to her. Day by day she slowly but surely advanced in humility and love ; she sat, a childlike learner at the feet of Him who is meek and lowly in heart ; and her spirit caught his tone, and was gradually transformed into his likeness. And those who witnessed, as I did, this marvellous self-improvement in my mother, could only exclaim with wondering thankfulness, " What hath God wrought ! "

Meanwhile, the gentle and happy-minded little Annie, like some fair bud of promise, unfolded her delicate petals, and diffused a rich fragrance within our quiet dwelling ; and had not the dark past mantled our sky with its shadow, all would have been bright around us and before us. It seemed unlikely now that we should ever hear of my brother, and yet I could not help cherishing the hope that William would yet return ; for I argued that the same hand which had subdued my mother's pride could as easily guide back her wandering son. It appeared to me that her life would be incomplete without such a sequel ; I fear I almost thought that since she was by God's grace prepared for it, it ought to come. Then again I used to check myself by turning to the biography of others. David, though repentant and pardoned, was denied the life of his infant child ; and the mother of Isaac, though she

probably bewailed the effects of her sinful deception, did not live to welcome her favourite and enriched son. Still I continued to hope on.

Well, Christmas-time came with its festivities, its reunions, and its greetings; and joy sat upon many a brow, and gladdened many a heart. And for Annie's sake, I busied myself in many a little home preparation which would otherwise have been untouched. There was to be a Christmas-tree, a Christmas-stocking, and a Christmas-party. And my dear mother, ever generous-hearted, and now more so than ever, loaded me as well as the child with thoughtful and appropriate presents. Ah, it was *twelve* years since she had thus acted a loving parent's part to my brother! Could I, could she fail to remember this? And as I carefully laid aside my welcome treasures, the thought hastily rushed through my mind, "If I could only have my brother back again, that would be the best gift of all." But a soft whisper in my heart at that same moment bade me remember that a better gift than even the restoration of a loved and never-forgotten brother was already mine. And as I gazed by faith on the infant Saviour in his lowly manger, my sadness passed into a song, and I could take up the glowing argument of an exulting believer, and exclaim, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" "All things;" that is, all things that will be conducive to our good, and promotive of his glory. And then rose the would-not-be-repressed inquiry, as to whether my brother's return were included in those limits. And I answered myself, for no other reply came, "Lord, thou only knowest, and I leave it with thee;

assured that thou canst not deny me any real blessing, and desirous of having my will so blended with thy will as to rest satisfied with whatever thou shalt appoint." This calm, childlike confidence gave me great inward peace.

I was very busy on Christmas-eve with some old pensioners ; a number of poor aged men and women, who came to have their baskets well filled with those various commodities which are so acceptable to such as have straitened incomes and but few friends. Our neat little kitchen stands on the right-hand side of the hall, so that the feeble and the decrepit found an easy access ; and as I had many applicants, there was a continual coming and going. As I was giving old Harry Greenwood, in addition to his share of good things, some pretty story-books for his little grandchildren, the maid who was helping me touched my arm, and said in a hasty whisper, "There's a gentleman waiting to speak to you, Miss." He had come in unobserved with old Harry. Wondering what the girl meant, I looked up, and saw to my surprise a tall, dark-looking man standing in the doorway, with his eyes intently fixed upon me, and apparently irresolute as to his next movement. Was it a dream, or a reality ? I could hardly tell, and I have but a confused recollection of what followed ; all I know is, that I sprang impetuously forwards, and, murmuring my brother's name, was folded with a close and passionate embrace in the stranger's arms. Yes, my prayers were answered : William had returned to us. Oh, how fondly he bent over me ! I forgot all the past sorrow in the present joy.

"But my mother, Frances," he said in a low,

impatient tone ; his lip quivered, and I could feel that he slightly trembled ; "Where is my mother? is she — ?" — I was about to reply, when there was a quickened step across the hall ; gentle as William's tones were, a mother's ear had caught them ; and before I had time to utter a word, the weeping parent and her long-severed son had met, and were more than reconciled.

It was well that the last old pensioners were supplied, or I fear they must have waited till the morrow, for I could not bear to leave my brother for a minute. To sit and look at him seemed joy enough to me, and yet when he spoke, every word was like music in my ears. And if such were my feelings, what must my mother's have been ?

As we gathered around the blazing fire with our hands fondly locked in each other's, and our tearful glances answering to our tremulous speeches, I thought that our happiness was as perfect as any happiness on this side the grave could be. I hardly deemed the augmentation of it possible. And yet it was to be speedily increased.

In the midst of our broken conversation, the door was slowly half opened, and little Annie, with a gaily-dressed doll in her arms, peeped her little head inside the room. She and Fanny, the younger servant, had been very busily employed during the week in providing the doll with an entire new suit of apparel against Christmas-day ; and as they had got rather behind-hand with their work, the things were only just completed ; and now they were sent down for our inspection. "Come in, Annie, love," said my mother, as the child hesitated to advance. Dear little Annie ! what a sweet

picture she would have made, with her fair, sunny face lighted up with such a happy smile, as she stepped forward, holding with great care her miniature baby, and regarding it with undisguised admiration.

On hearing my mother's remark to Annie, William started, and looked round; and the moment his eyes rested upon the child, he turned extremely pale, and seemed strangely agitated. Then with a hasty stride towards our little pet, he caught her up, and pressing her to his bosom, exclaimed, "My precious Annie! my darling child! is it possible?" The little creature appeared for a moment as bewildered as we were, and then nestling her little face against his, and throwing her arms round his neck, she recognised the renewed relationship by saying in a delighted tone, "Papa, dear papa!"

Was little Annie really William's child, then? Yes, nor can the fact seem more wonderful to others than it did to us. But how was it, it may be asked, that she was ignorant of her own surname? Not ignorant, but only forgetful; and it was easily accounted for. She was named Annie May Mackenzie, with her mother's maiden name of "Annie May;" and in order to distinguish her in the family, was usually so called. For a twelve-month previous to her arrival in England, she lived chiefly with a maternal uncle,—for William was much engaged in travelling, and his wife, for the sake of her health, generally accompanied him,—and this uncle, not having any children of his own, was exceedingly desirous of retaining the charge of little Annie; and while under his roof she rarely heard the name of Mackenzie, and at her tender age soon ceased to remember it. The long voyage too, and the horrors of that awful shipwreck,

had greatly weakened, if not effaced early recollections ; and even when the presence of her father came with a sudden electric shock upon her, it failed in awakening much more memory of the past. And it seemed a profound mystery to her, a mystery which she was long in unravelling, how William could be my mother's son.

To my brother, this unexpected meeting with his little girl was like life from the dead, for he had long believed the woful tidings that she and her mother perished with the rest of the ill-fated passengers that stormy night at sea. He had sent his wife and child, under the care of friends, before him to England, partly on account of his wife's delicate health, which required an immediate change of climate ; and partly that her introduction to my mother might smoothe the way for his own return to his family ; increased years and responsibilities, and the influence of better feelings, having softened his resentment, and made him long for the friendship of his early home. But when the news of the terrible catastrophe respecting the vessel reached him, all desire to see his own country again vanished in a moment. His irreparable loss seemed to his distracted mind like a judgment from heaven ; and a severe and lengthened illness ensued, from which he very slowly recovered. And in those hours of weakness his grief-stricken spirit yearned for communion with his mother and his sister ; but business, and many unforeseen circumstances, hindered for awhile the accomplishment of his cherished purpose.

And oh, what a tale we had to tell him in return ! a tale deeply affecting in its details, and yet upon the whole consolatory ; for was it not a mournful relief to

him to learn that his beloved wife had been nursed, and cared for, and watched over in her dying moments, although she knew it not, by his own nearest relatives? And now to find that his lost little Annie May was the adopted darling of his mother and sister!

What a Christmas-eve that was! it stands out by itself in the chronicles of the past as a period to be ever had in grateful remembrance. Very sweet is the recollection of its pleasant converse. And old Harry Greenwood hobbled away as fast as he could to the rectory with the news of the wanderer's return; and the good rector was soon amongst us, to offer his hearty congratulations, and to take the lead in our evening's thanksgivings. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this our brother was dead, and was alive again; and was lost, and was found. And when the kind minister laid his hand on little Annie's head, and gave her his fervent blessing, was there a heart in our midst that did not silently breathe forth its earnest Amen, and pray that the dear child's future life might be in accordance with its early promise?

* * * * *

Years of tranquil domestic happiness, marked by some changes, have brought me to the period at which I am now writing. My brother and myself still live together in the little ivy-wreathed cottage where we dwelt in childhood; and his kind and delicate attentions are very cheering to a lonely invalid, for our beloved mother is no longer with us. A few months since she quietly fell asleep in Jesus; but we sorrowed not for her as those without hope; for we knew that our loss was her gain: and that, justified by faith in the righteousness of

Christ, her perfected spirit was rejoicing in the sunshine of his presence.

And our gentle Annie, our ever-affectionate daughter, what have I to tell about her?

This is her wedding-day! Our sweet child was married this morning to her early playmate, Alfred, the worthy successor of his departed father, both in the ministry and at the old rectory; and therefore we shall still have her near us and amongst us. May God's blessing richly rest upon our darling, so that she may fulfil the duties of her new mission with earnestness and gladness, and be to her husband the comfort and the joy which she has long been to us!

After the bustle and excitement of the wedding-breakfast was over; and our dear Annie with mingled smiles and tears had departed with her husband on her happy tour, I felt, as one naturally feels at such a time, dull and dispirited. I could not settle to any of my usual employments. And chiefly for the purpose of fixing and occupying my restless thoughts, I sat down at my desk and wrote this brief, but to me interesting, account of Annie's Mission.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

TWO SONNETS.

I.

LOVE thee ! O Thou, the world's eternal Sire !
Whose palace is the vast infinity,
Time, space, height, depth, O God ! are full of thee,
And sun-eyed seraphs tremble and admire.
Love thee ! but thou art girt with vengeful fire,
And mountains quake, and banded nations flee,
And terror shakes the wide unfathom'd sea,
When the heavens rock with thy tempestuous ire.
O thou, too vast for thought to comprehend,
That wast ere time, shalt be when time is o'er ;
Ages and worlds begin, grow old, and end,
Systems and suns thy changeless throne before,
Commence and close their cycles : lost, I bend
To earth my prostrate soul, and shudder and adore.

II.

Love thee ! oh, clad in human lowliness,
In whom each heart its mortal kindred knows ;
Our flesh, our form, our tears, our pains, our woes,
A fellow-wanderer o'er earth's wilderness !

Love thee ! whose every word but breathes to bless.
Through thee, from long-seal'd lips glad language flows
The blind their eyes, that laugh with light, unclose,
And babes, unchid, thy garment's hem caress.
I see thee, doom'd by bitterest pangs to die,
Up the sad hill with willing footsteps move,
With scourge, and taunt, and wanton agony,
While the cross nods in hideous gloom above,
Though all, even there, be radiant Deity ;
Speechless I gaze, and my whole soul is Love .

REV. H. MILMAN.



AUSTRALIAN FLOWERS.

LORD BACON calls a garden “the purest of human pleasures.” Certainly it must be among them, for wherever we roam, we carry with us our attachment to flowers; hence our colonists have scarcely erected their log-cabin in a distant clime, before they plant around it some favourites brought from their fatherland, or some denizens of the country in which they have found a home. The gardens of Australia are described as mingling the blossoms of its own latitudes with those brought from afar.

This great colony has opened a new scene, where the accomplished botanist may prosecute his researches with the certainty of adding largely to his floral treasures, and where the humble settler may adorn his cabin with flowers unknown in his native land. “Botany Bay” was a name appropriately given by its discoverers to a portion of this vast island, or rather fifth continent of the world. Here forests of magnificent gum-trees tower to an extraordinary height, while the surface of the ground is often clothed with dense and impervious underwood, and the whole is festooned with creepers from the size of the slender convolvulus to that of the cable of the largest man-of-war. The flowers of the plain, though beautiful,

are generally without scent. A few specimens of the latter are given in our engraving.

The PRETTY CORREA has a stiff stem and prickly leaves, and presents a string of delicate pendulous flowers, red, orange, salmon, and white. It is something like a fuchsia, and by its admirers is deemed more brilliant.

The BORONIA (*Boronia serrulata*) is of a fine rose colour, and has been called the Australian Rose. It is one of the few bush flowers that has an odour. Wafted on the gale, it commends itself pleasantly to the senses; but on closer acquaintance, it is too strong to be agreeable. On its being transplanted, it was found to require the protection of a greenhouse in winter, though in summer it is an ornamental shrub for our lawns. The small blue blossom is called the MORNING FLOWER.

The SCARLET KENNEDYA is a vetch-like flower, and is very graceful as it is seen pendant on its stem. Colonel Mundy found a white variety, whose blossom is so small as to need a microscope to examine its minute beauties.

The daisy-formed HAIRY PYRETHRUM, with its cream-coloured exterior and golden eye, is much admired.

The GREATER CLITORIA (*Clitoria ternatea major*), produces flowers of a considerable size, generally of a bright blue, though also of a pearly tint. A species of this plant is a native of India. The Australian Clitorea was a few years since raised from seed at Blackheath, Kent, and has since been introduced into many English gardens.

AUNT MILDRED'S VISIT.

(PROV. xiv. 1.)

AN unusual bustle disturbed the quiet shades of Heatherfield during the first week in May. My wedding-day was drawing nigh ; the company had all been invited ; my lively cousin Florence and her ever-volatile brother had arrived ; and they, together with three younger sisters and two brothers of my own, kept up such a perpetual rattle in honour of the occasion, that even I, albeit in nowise remarkable for sobriety, was often fain to fly to the shelter of my own apartment from their overwhelming merriment. Shut in from the outer din of idle words, the inward monitor could make itself heard, and its voice, though gentle, sometimes upbraided me for a levity very unbecoming the circumstances in which I was placed.

I was about not only to be a wife, but to be the wife of a minister of the gospel. Lewis M——, my betrothed, had lately accepted the oversight of an important charge, a few miles distant from my home. It was a busy place, and thither in a few days I was to be transplanted, to occupy a position of considerable importance,—I, a girl of twenty, who had never been a month together absent from the seclusion of Heather-

field, or from under my mother's tender care and ever-judicious guidance. What wonder if I sometimes quailed at the prospect before me, and pondered with strange feelings why the choice of one like Lewis had been fixed on me, and whether it was possible that I could ever prove a help meet for him.

In some measure to account for the part which Lewis bore in this anomaly, I shall just say our attachment had grown up with us from childhood ; and before either of us had been led to the consideration of anything higher than earthly happiness, our union, so soon as circumstances should permit, had become on all sides a thing understood if not expressed. How far the permission of such an understanding, on the part of our friends, was wise, may be a question, but who looks for wisdom in matters of the kind ? Lewis was the first whose mind was directed heavenward. Susceptible as he was of every tender affection which is still the growth of earth, he began to discover that there was an inner chamber of his heart which earth could not fill. This discovery once made, he was not long in ascertaining where only the satisfaction he sighed for could be found ; and ere he had attained the age of nineteen, the love of Christ had constrained him to devote the stores of an already cultivated mind to the service of Him who died for him and rose again.

But he did not, therefore, consider his tacit engagement with me as void. On the contrary, he strove to bind it more closely ; and with all the energy of a "first love," he pleaded with me the cause of the Saviour he loved, and his words were to me as "a very lovely song of one that had a pleasant voice, and could play

well on an instrument." I listened with rapt attention, with charmed ear, and with streaming eyes. I will not say that I heard his words but did them not, yet I dared not at the time ask myself how far I had mistaken the love of a creature, and the desire to think as he thought and to feel as he felt, for the soul's surrender of itself to Him who will accept of no second place in the affections.

It is easy to make us believe what we wish ; and Lewis was soon satisfied that all was right with me. Having found the claims of Divine love irresistible to himself, he could not conceive the possibility of their being resisted by a yielding heart like mine. He had not then experience enough to know that the very yieldingness of a heart which prevents it from resisting, often equally prevents it from receiving a durable impression of heavenly things. But, in truth, he had no reason to form an unfavourable judgment in my case. I was living a life of quiet happiness, where I met but few temptations to oppose or reject the gospel to whose blessings he invited me, and where more than one circumstance tended to create in me a *prejudice*, if I may so speak, in favour of religion. My mother was a most lovely and loving Christian ; it was only a marvel that the holy air that seemed to breathe around her should have left any of us to grow beyond the age of childhood uninfluenced by its power ; and then when Lewis himself had embraced the good and right way,—when I saw the joy of heaven glowing on his cheek, beaming in his eye, and irradiating his whole countenance,—when I heard it flowing in dulcet accents from his lips, seeking to bless others from that

"well of water" which was in his own bosom "springing up unto everlasting life,"—it needed little encouragement from any other source to lead me to the persuasion that I too was a Christian.

And now the day for our marriage was fixed. After three years' diligent preparation for the ministry, he had become the pastor of a flock, and arrangements were being made for my speedily taking my part in the responsibilities of his position. There was no misgiving on his mind as to my fitness for the trust, nor until I found myself yielding too readily to the influence of my volatile companions was there any on mine. Of our inconsiderate gaiety he never was a witness. He was seldom with us, his engagements wholly occupying his time, unless when occasionally he came to spend an hour or two with us of an evening; and then, all gentleness as he was, and without a shade of austerity either in his manners or character, his presence was a check to all frivolity and lightness,—even Florence and her brother Leonard yielding themselves unconsciously to the influence of his unobtrusive and attractive piety. It was after such occasions, when he had departed, and the laugh and song had recommenced, that my feelings revolted from the idle mirth, and I fled from it to the quiet of my room, to "commune" awhile "with my own heart and be still."

But there was one who all this time watched me closely. Not prone to dictate, my dear mother was perhaps too backward in proffering the advice I needed. She saw the influence that Lewis could exercise over me by his presence, but she knew the time was coming when his presence would cease to be a novelty; and

what if with the novelty the influence itself should cease, and he should discover too late that he had marred his own usefulness by uniting himself to one who was incapable of sympathizing with him in his work? My mother had reason for feeling deeply on this subject, though I knew not the cause then.

Another day, and I was to become a bride. I had retired early from the breakfast-table to make my final arrangements, when my mother followed me to my dressing-room. Seating herself beside me with glistening eyes, she took my hand and looked fondly into my face. "There is much, very much, I could wish to say to you, Ellinor," she said, "on this the last day of your old home life; and I had intended to say it, although it would have been an effort; but I am spared the pain of making it by the unexpected arrival of a visitor, who wishes to see you before you leave this. Aunt Mildred came this morning."

"Aunt Mildred come!" I started and felt myself turn pale, for though I knew scarcely anything of the person mentioned, I had an undefinable awe, almost amounting to dread in connexion with the idea of her, that made me shrink from meeting her. All I had ever heard respecting her consisted of vague hints, some of which had come from my giddy cousins, who, in their light way, and ignorant of her real history, had sketched her as some weird being, over whom hung a mysterious horror that blighted everything within its influence, and they had professed to congratulate me on that influence being too remote to cast a spell upon my wedding-day. I knew all this was only the "foolish talking and jesting" which are at all times "not conve-

nient ;" yet I had allowed it so far to rest upon my mind, as that when I heard of her being actually under the same roof, I almost trembled with fear. She was my mother's aunt, and from my mother I had learned that, long before I was born, she had been the subject of deep sorrow, accompanied by bitter remorse; that, in the terrible struggle, her mind had given way for a time. She had at length recovered, but lived long in seclusion, far from the surviving companions of her former days, and keeping up no intimate intercourse with any one but my mother, who had always been a favourite, and whose gentle piety had often soothed her in the seasons of her wildest despair.

" It was my intention," continued my mother, without noticing my perturbation, " to have myself told you Aunt Mildred's story to-day, but she wishes to tell it to you herself; and it is a strong proof of the interest she takes in you, that she could resolve on leaving her retirement and travelling so great a distance, for the purpose of imparting what she hopes may be a useful lesson to you.

As she spoke, my mother drew my arm within hers, and led me into her own private sitting-room. Here, beside a partially darkened window, sat Aunt Mildred in deep thought, from which she did not awake until we stood beside her.

She grasped my hand when she saw me. " Let in the light, Winney," she said, addressing my mother, " and bring a chair." She made me sit before her; she put aside the bands of hair that shaded my face, and laying her hand on my forehead, she looked long, intently, and silently into my face. " So young,"

she said at length, “and to be a minister’s wife to-morrow!” She withdrew her hand, covered her face with her handkerchief, and wept for many minutes without restraint.

While she had been scrutinizing my face, I had been doing the same with hers, so far as my agitated feelings would permit. It was a strange countenance,—the eyes seemed the only flexible part; it was as if in some sudden and strong emotion the muscles had become rigid, and never relaxed again. Could we suppose the sea in a storm suddenly turned into stone, it might have imaged her countenance. The eyes alone expressed the changing feelings of the mind, and they were soft, yet full of meaning and penetration. “Leave us now, Winney,” she said, when after a time she became composed; and I was left alone with Aunt Mildred.

“I am not going to oppress you with advice, Ellinor,” she began; “I am only going to tell you my story. Should that story fail to impress you with a sense of the solemn responsibility on which you will enter to-morrow, no advice of mine could be of any avail.

“More than forty years ago I married, with prospects as bright as yours. Like you, I married a minister of the gospel, one who had received into the depths of his own heart the message he bore to others; one who loved me well, and whom I loved in return, only with too idolatrous an affection. I set out in my married life with the idea that my love for my husband was to be an abiding safeguard. I made it the mainspring of my conduct, and fancied because the spring was powerful, the machinery must all go right. Ellinor, I was not a Christian then! I was an idolater; but neither my idol

nor myself were aware that the love which would have kept every human affection in its place was a stranger to my heart.

"I was not long in discovering my mistake. How far he had detected it I know not. His was indeed the charity that "thinketh no evil;" and even years after, when I had proved myself not "an help meet for him"—when I had saddened his heart and darkened his home by my neglect of duty—no word of upbraiding ever fell from his lips. I had no sympathy with his work—how could I? He entered alone into his closet and shut the door; the sick and the afflicted were left to him—I shared not the burden; when depressed and discouraged by the dulness and coldness of his hearers, he had to bear it alone—I was the dullest and coldest among them all. Where was my love for him? It existed still, but I now felt that it was insufficient to reconcile me to a life for which the love of Jesus alone could have fitted me.

"The only work connected with religion into which I entered with spirit was such as brought me into the bustle of society,—the chit-chat of a committee-meeting; the excitement of a religious anniversary; the éclat of a charitable soirée; the passing from house to house among the gay, the wealthy, and the polite, in quest of contributions for a charitable or religious purpose: these occupied my mind for the time, and lifted from it the burden of ennui,—but oh! her husband's helper, where was she all the time?

"And matters became worse and worse. My eldest child was a boy,—a lovely boy he was, and for a while his beauty reconciled me to home; but I was soon

weary of its duties. I persuaded myself that change was necessary for my health. The physician persuaded my husband of the same, and a watering-place was ordered, and I went to a fashionable one, taking the child with me, to be admired, petted, spoiled, and then neglected.

"I returned home; and now it was an understood thing that my health could not brook much confinement at home, and I was more than ever a stranger to domestic life in its truest, happiest sense. Servants ruled the house, while I was either abroad on pretence of health, or a nervous invalid (as I supposed) in my chamber. Had the pretext been anything but my health, my husband might have reasoned with me; as it was, there were those that would have called him cruel had he interfered. He loved me—oh! how ill I deserved it! he soothed me in my supposed illness, gave me every facility for enjoying the life which was said to be necessary; bore the trials of his own lot without a murmur; went abroad to do his Master's work, comforting his own soul by comforting the souls of others; and returned to his house to shut himself up in his study with his Father and his God. And so I suffered him to live.

"The boy was two years old when my little girl was born, my sweet Anna. She was a fragile flower from the first. The physician said I must hire a nurse, that the confinement of nursing would destroy my health, and the child was delicate; and so I thought I was consulting her benefit when I consigned her to the care of another. Oh, unrenewed heart!" murmured Aunt Mildred, "deceitful above all things and desperately

wicked, who can know thee? Anna was brought home in a year and a half, a bud of infantile beauty, looking as if it were ready to expand in Paradise. She had the heavenly glance of her father's eye, the tender lovingness of her father's heart; she came to twine herself about his affections, to let him know there was one heart in his home that loved him as he should be loved.

" Meanwhile the boy had grown rapidly in stature—alas! not in wisdom. They said, indeed, he was a clever child, and I was proud of that, though I knew he was wayward, untractable, and turbulent. Complaints were brought to me from one quarter and another of his juvenile delinquencies. I kept them from his father. People said his father should have looked more to his son; ah! they knew not how he looked, how he watched, how he strove, how he suffered; but the father cannot supply the mother's place, it is vain to expect it.

" Year after year passed by, and the boy was sent to school. My husband chose a good school, a Christian master; but the best master cannot root out sin from the young heart, and there were bad boys in the school, and these were my son's chosen companions. Could I expect it to be otherwise? and daily he learned new lessons in the school of Satan. But the worst lesson he learned was duplicity, and it was his mother taught him that; I still continued to conceal his misdeeds from his father, and he never suspected how far his son had already wandered in the paths of the destroyer. In his presence the evil propensities were restrained, and he knew not that the seed, which daily he scattered with a gentle and judicious hand at the morning and evening worship,

was falling on ground so preoccupied with thorns and thistles, that it would need to be subjected to the hottest fire of affliction before the evil plants could be destroyed, and the good seed have room to grow.

"But if it was choked in her brother's heart, it grew early and rapidly in Anna's. She was her father's comfort, and I can bless God now that he had her to comfort him, though she put me to shame. She was scarcely more than a child, when she first began trying to supply her mother's place in the household. I was now really an invalid, made one by selfishness and long indulgence. Self-created invalids are generally irritable and exacting, but Anna bore it all, and helped her father to bear it likewise; and often when he returned home weary and worn down from his work, grieved at contentions and jealousies, and pride and worldliness, and bearing the burden of the afflicted in his sympathizing heart, her loving looks and gentle words would raise him above present troubles, and send him with renewed 'assurance of hope,' to the throne of heavenly grace.

"Yet he looked at her with trembling, and selfish as I was, so did I. She was still a tender blossom, nor did we dare to hope that she ever would be otherwise. She alone seemed unconscious of danger, and walked on from day to day in the sunlight of her heavenly Father's love, and happy in her earthly father's smiles. We urged her to leave us on a visit to a friend who had invited her to spend a month or two in Devonshire; but no, it pained her to think of it, she said; she could not bear to leave us, and we ceased to ask her; and so she remained with us, fading—fading—fading, yet exerting all her little strength in endeavours to

make us happy, until one chilly evening, rushing to the door to welcome her father home after an absence of a few days, she caught a sudden cold; it seized her lungs, and in one week after she burst a blood-vessel, and died on her father's bosom, her arms round his neck.

"What right had I to weep for her? I had much to reproach myself with in regard to her. Tears were too great a luxury for me. I shed none; but the blow drove me to my knees, not to pray, but to groan. Yet as it struck upon my petrified heart, it seemed to awaken a feeble sound like the far echo of the publican's prayer, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'

"But I needed fresh blows and heavier, to break the stony heart in pieces, and I myself had already prepared the rod with which they were to be inflicted. The boy, after spending several years at his first school, had been sent to one at a considerable distance, where he was to be prepared for business. It was just six months before the time that Anna left us, and he was nearly sixteen. I had written privately to the principal, requesting that all letters relating to him while at the school should be addressed to me, assigning as a reason my husband's many engagements. More than once, I received communications complaining of his ungovernable disposition, and requesting parental interference. I did interfere; I wrote to the delinquent, beseeching, entreating, promising; but I had broken the yoke too soon, and I might as well have expected to guide the wild ass of the wilderness by a silken thread. One month before Anna's death, I received the intelligence that a rebellion had broken out in the school, of which

he had been the inciter and leader; that as such he had been marked for severer punishment; that he had refused to submit and sue for pardon; and that finally, having reached the climax of his violence by striking the master, he had been publicly and summarily expelled.

"What could I do? Oh! keep it from his father, keep it from his father by any means,—my old weakness. But where was the boy? I was not long in suspense. Early, a few mornings after, a girl brought me a paper, a petition she said, and she was to give it to none but me; his initials were on the paper. He was wandering in a disguise which he had procured, among the cottages of the neighbourhood. I saw him, gave him money to go to London, and a letter to a friend entreating that shelter might be given him till I could decide what to do. He might go to sea, I thought, and the excuse would be easy that he was of a restless disposition, and liked better the excitement of a sea life than sitting quietly to business; and so I flattered myself all would be well.

"And then came Anna's death, and even while she lay in her coffin, a withered flower yet beautiful still, with Heaven's peace, that had sustained her in dying, yet graven upon the lifeless clay, and we sat beside her until the sad moment when all that remained of her on earth should be hidden from our sight, a letter came to me; I opened it trembling, glanced my eye over its contents, and with a cry of horror fell senseless on the ground.

"When I recovered, which was not till after many hours, my husband was gone. He had read the letter,

and discovered all. He just waited to lay his loved and loving child in her early grave, and then hastened to London to his unhappy son. There had been some riot or disturbance, in which the boy had joined ; violence had been committed, and life had been lost ; and although it was proved that he had not been the immediate cause of death, yet as aiding and abetting in that which had caused it, he must bear the penalty. The letter was written from a convict's cell, where he lay under sentence of transportation. 'A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.'

"I lay on my bed, conscious of nothing but a vague sense of indescribable misery. Friends came,—what could they do for me ? I was past the reach of human aid. No one knew what had happened, and I dreaded the terrible secret coming out—for some terrible secret I knew there was ; and though memory failed to grasp the particulars, I felt that it might start up before me at any moment like a fearful spectre, and that I had no power to restrain my tongue from publishing my shame to the world. And so days passed ; they might be days, or they might be hours, or they might be years, —I knew not. I was incapable of measuring time, or realizing anything, until I saw my husband standing at my bedside,—he whom I had so cruelly injured, he whose peace I had destroyed, whose best years I had embittered ; and he reproached me not—no, not even with a look.

"He had not much to tell. He had seen the boy ; had seen him to the last ; had prayed with him for the last time ; for the last time had urged him to 'repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus

Christ.' He had seen him on board the vessel which was to take him to his lonely exile ; had seen the anchor weighed, and the canvass spread, and the breeze bearing him from his native shore ; and then he had returned home, more earnest than ever to devote to the service of his Redeemer the remainder of a life, all whose streams of earthly happiness were poisoned at the spring.

"The sight of him brought all before me,—the nature of my suffering, the greatness of my sin. I started up, and flung myself at his feet. Wringing my hands, I prayed, I entreated forgiveness. He raised me ;—'Mildred,' he said, "to the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him ;" are you ready to call upon him, and say, "Against Thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight ?" Have you ever seen the perfection of His holiness ? O Mildred ! have you ever seen the love, the compassion that shines from the cross of Christ ?' He talked to me as I could listen ; he prayed beside me ; oh what prayer was his !—It was as if he looked direct upon the throne of grace,—as if he heard the pleadings of the Advocate above, and himself breathed an echo of the heavenly intercession. Out of the fulness of his wrung heart he strove to pour soothing into mine, and for a time I *was* soothed.

"But there was one bitter drop within my heart, which even the cross itself seemed then to have no power to sweeten. The boy was an outcast,—an outcast from home and from heaven ; and conscience told me it *was* I who had sent him forth from the face of God, to be a

fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, with a mark upon his forehead. And what would be the end?

"My husband went again among his people, and he saw that the tidings had been before him. He learned it not from coldness, or from slight, or contempt, nor yet from affected sympathy or rudely proffered condolence: he learned it from their deeper kindness,—their increased respect. Oh! they loved him; every one loved him as he should have been loved, save only she who should have loved him best of all.

"The next sabbath morning he was in his place. Years after I heard the story of that day. The place of worship was crowded; it seemed as if all who had ever drunk the truth from his lips were present, yet there was an awful stillness. Nothing broke it but the sounds made by the rising or kneeling of the congregation, and more than once the voice of sorrow, suppressed as soon as uttered; and he prayed as if his prayer had wings and was bearing him to heaven; and he poured forth the words of sacred song—

'By thine hour of dire despair;
By thine agony of prayer,'—

as if he knelt at the Redeemer's feet, and had laid hold of the hem of his garment. And he discoursed of that mysterious agony from the words, 'And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.' And then he blessed his hearers, and the effort was over; the overstrained bow snapped, and his head sank down upon the open Bible before him.

"For a time it was thought he prayed within himself,

and no one moved; but when several minutes had passed, and he remained in the same position, and the arm that had been extended in benediction hung motionless over the front of the pulpit, a friend went up and raised him. He was dead!

"And so my cup of bitterness was filled to overflowing, and then I drank it to the dregs. Reason fled, and years after were years of darkness. The only ray of light that fell on my path, the only balm that soothed my wounded spirit, came from the visits of your dear mother. She was a few years older than my Anna, but they had been companions, and together they had given their young hearts to Christ, and hand in hand they had walked in his ways. When your mother visited me, her voice was to my spirit as the notes of David's harp to the unhappy monarch of Israel, and the demon of despair yielded for a while to its influence.

"But there was still that one drop in the potion I had mixed for myself that must be taken away ere I could find peace, even were reason restored. I could think of Anna and of her father as 'casting their crowns before the throne,' and singing 'the song of Moses and of the Lamb,' and I could think of a voice from that throne saying,—'They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.' I could think of this until sorrow for them vanished, and I felt how far happier was their lot than all the love of earth could make it. But the boy! was he to be shut out from them for ever? and supposing I myself were a brand plucked from the burning, must I know that I had done what in me lay to destroy him, and tremble lest I should have succeeded? Blessed be God, the antidote to this

bitter drop came at last. After ten years, your mother brought me a letter from him; I knew the writing. He had been led to repentance unto life, and found peace with God through Christ. His father's last exhortation had never been forgotten, and, seconded by the instructions of a missionary friend, it had, by God's grace, brought him to the foot of the cross, and there the power and the burden of sin had been removed together. It seemed all I needed, all I had left to pray for. I could now kiss the rod that smote me, and bless the hand that had directed it; and while I traced all to the fountain of Divine mercy, I could rejoice to think, that my boy and I owed our convictions of sin, and our sense of pardon, to the same instrumentality,—the last exhortations of a saint on the borders of heaven.

"I received many letters from him after that, and at last he came. The term of banishment had expired, and I had been removed to my present abode; and one day he stood before me; ONE day: he remained no longer. We sat together the whole of that night, and early in the morning he left, and I saw him no more. He only returned that I might have additional evidence that Christ had received him; that for once we might speak together of the things belonging to our peace, and then he went back to the land of his exile, to work under his friend the missionary, for the spiritual good of the convicts. Five years he worked, and a blessing was on his labours, and then he caught a fever in a hospital, where he used to pray and read for the patients, and in a few days he went to swell the song of the redeemed in heaven."

Aunt Mildred's recital cost me many tears, and when the excitement of listening had ceased, I wept on, and she bore me company. It was not sympathy alone that caused my tears ; it was that I felt, as I had never felt before, the importance and the critical character of my anticipated position ; it was that I felt, as I had never felt before, the necessity of having Christ dwelling in my heart if I would be equal to its duties ; and my tears were mingled with many prayers that his glory might be my object, his favour my happiness, and that I might be faithful to him even unto death.

"Ellinor," said Aunt Mildred after a lengthened silence, "bind these words upon your heart ; 'Every wise woman buildeth her house : but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.' Be a wise woman, Ellinor ; seek Divine wisdom, and walk by its guidance ; make no 'crooked paths ; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.' **BUILD YOUR HOUSE** ; be your husband's *helper* ; when he enters into his closet, when he retires to his study, when he visits the afflicted, when he stands up in the pulpit, let the insensible influence of your *help* be with him ; whatever you can do to help him abroad, do it, but remember your first duty to him and to God is this, to **BUILD YOUR HOUSE**. Be your children's loving, judicious, and unwearied monitress ; train them up in the way they should go, and that from the first bud of intellect, and when they are old they will not depart from it ; and remember, 'A wise son maketh a glad father ; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.' **BUILD YOUR HOUSE** : regulate all its concerns, think none of them beneath your care, none of them too wearisome for your strength ; be the

softened sunbeam shining through the house, on husband, children, servants, friends; be the silken tie that binds the household together; be the unfelt yet elastic spring that keeps it all in motion; be the presiding genius that causes each member to work in harmony with the rest, and to work for good; and be all this through the strength of your heavenly Father, for the love of your Divine Redeemer, by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. O Ellinor, be a wise woman that **BUILDETH HER HOUSE**, not a foolish one who plucketh it down with her hands. Alas! alas! I was a foolish woman; I plucked down my house stone by stone, till I had left myself nothing to do but to sit and weep over the ruins."

M. B. T.

“ THOU HAST MADE SUMMER AND
WINTER.”

My God, all nature owns thy sway ;
Thou giv'st the night, and thou the day ;
When all thy loved creation wakes,
When morning rich in lustre breaks,
And bathes in dew the opening flower,
To thee we owe her fragrant hour ;
And, when she pours her choral song,
Her melodies to thee belong ;
Or when, in paler tints array'd,
The evening slowly spreads her shade,
That soothing shade, that grateful gloom,
Can, more than day's enlivening bloom,
Still every fond and vain desire,
And calmer, purer thoughts inspire ;
From earth the pensive spirit free,
And lead the soften'd heart to thee.
In every scene thy hands have dress'd,
In every form by thee impress'd,
Upon the mountain's awful head,
Or where the sheltering woods are spread ;

In every note that swells the gale,
Or tuneful stream that cheers the vale,
The cavern's depth or echoing grove,—
A voice is heard of praise and love.
As o'er thy works the seasons roll,
And soothe, with change of bliss, the soul,
Oh ! never may their smiling train
Pass o'er the human soul in vain !
But oft as on their charms we gaze,
Attune the wondering soul to praise ;
And be the joys that most we prize,
The joys that from thy favour rise.

H. M. WILLIAMS.



SOUTH AMERICAN FLOWERS.

IT is said of Linnæus, the great Swedish botanist, that when a splendid flower was shown to him for the first time, he fell on his knees and thanked God for beautifying the earth with such objects of loveliness. So also Columbus was overcome with rapture as his eyes gazed on the rich vegetation of the newly-found shores of America. Allowing for the joy and enthusiasm of a discoverer, there are truly glorious floral treasures in Southern America, which may well excite the admiration of the beholder, and which receive the praise of all travellers. From this part of the earth we are indebted for several favourites, which have now become naturalized in English gardens.

The DAHLIA is a native of Mexico. Its name was given to it in honour of Dahl, a pupil of Linnaeus. In its wild state, it is a bushy plant, seven or eight feet high, and by no means so attractive as when cultivated. Under skilful management it improves in size and form, and assumes such a variety of showy tints as to make it the glory of our autumn garden. The first species, *Dahlia sambucifolia*, was introduced into this country in 1804, by Lady Holland.

ONCIDIUM PELICANUM is one of the orchidaceous plants. Different species of its flowers present the appearance of bees, butterflies, and various insects and birds. The one given in our engraving is the *Pelican oncidium*, from an imaginary resemblance to that bird when pressing its breast with its beak. Its general colour is bright yellow, slightly dashed with crimson.

Ross's **ODONTOGLOSSUM** (*Odontoglossum Rossii*) is another of the orchids, and nearly related to the Oncidium. The flowers are handsome and showy. One species bears blossoms nine inches in circumference, and of great beauty. Its flowers appear at first sight like butterflies resting on the stem of the plant. The plant has been cultivated in English hothouses.

ERREMBAUT'S ALSTROEMERIA is a peculiarly handsome flower, found in South America. Its name is derived from Baron Alströmer, a Swedish botanist, and Errembault, the person who first raised it. The delicate rose-pink and streaked flowers are generally twelve in number on each stem, arranged in form of an umbel. The flowers are speckled, streaked, or blotched with different tints.

The **DUKE OF BEDFORD'S LISIANTHUS** (*Lisianthus Russellianus*) was brought from Mexico in 1835. It is an ornamental annual, and attains to the height of three feet, displaying its handsome brownish-purple flowers in the months of July and August. The calyx is deeply cut into five divisions, the leaves are egg-shaped, and placed opposite one to the other.

Among the most lovely of our adopted flowers from South America, is the **FUCHSIA**; a name given to the plant in honour of Fuchs, a celebrated German botanist.

It was introduced into England in 1788, and its first place of cultivation was Kew Gardens, where it was treated as a stove plant, but it was soon found capable of bearing the variable seasons of our climate in the open air.

Thou graceful flower, on graceful stem,
Of Flora's gifts a fav'rite gem,
From tropic fields thou cam'st to cheer
The natives of a climate drear;
And, grateful for our fostering care,
Hast learn'd the wintry blast to bear.

THE POSTMAN'S KNOCK.

"Has the mail come in yet, my dear?" said Mr. Waring to his daughter, as they sat together by their evening fire.

"Yes, papa," she replied, "the horn sounded when you were taking a little doze, and we can scarcely hope for a letter to-night." The old gentleman sighed, and his daughter, taking his hand affectionately, said, "Do not sigh, my dear father; all will be well yet;—you know we must expect disappointments sometimes."

"It was not for the disappointment that I sighed, Ellen; at least not altogether—but the psalmist's words, which characterize what the Lord's people ought to be, occurred to my mind, 'He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord';* and I thought how much I fall short of this child-like confidence in our heavenly Father's care. Surely my anxiety about this matter must be displeasing to him."

"Oh no, papa, 'for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth we are but dust!'[†] Your present anxiety is too natural, too unavoidable to be wrong." Mr. Waring shook his head.

* Ps. cxii. 7.

† Ps. ciii. 14.

"Perhaps, my child," he said, "such an excuse might have been admissible during the period of our uncertainty with respect to your brother's fate. Oh! Ellen, it was no wonder then that the sound of the postman's knock stopped our breath, and made our hearts beat as if they were coming out of our bosoms. But now, when nothing more than the loss of some few earthly comforts is at stake, I fear this anxiety is very inconsistent with such precepts as 'Take no thought for the morrow,' 'Be careful for nothing,' etc."

"Some few comforts, papa! our home, your nice garden, almost the only pleasure you have left—perhaps the happiness of being together—*can* we help feeling anxious about these? Oh! if Mr. Goulding has one spark of kindness left in his heart, he will write word that we shall still enjoy these."

"One spark of kindness, Ellen! If Mr. Goulding never noticed us again, could we doubt it? Should we not rather conclude that he had some good reason for ceasing to assist us, though he might not think it well to let us know what it was? I never had any claim upon his kindness, but one not often acknowledged in the world—early friendship; and if that have now ceased to influence him, let us, instead of condemning him, rather feel most thankful that we had the benefit of it so long."

"But, papa, I think you had another claim upon his kindness. When he went abroad to seek his fortune, did not you lend him a sum of money at the risk of never being repaid?"

"Only a small sum, my child, and he repaid it as soon as he could, writing to tell me that he was getting on

rapidly, and that if I sent my boy, my poor boy Richard to him, he would put him in the way of providing for himself, and for us likewise. How Richard's young face sparkled with joy at the thought of travelling, seeing the world, and visiting the countries he had read of! But when he saw my distress, and your mother's tears, he gave it up, like the best of sons, as he ever was. Then, Ellen, we lost your mother. Surely 'the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.'* And we lost soon after our chief means of support; and then I was obliged to let him accept Mr. Goulding's offer." The old man paused, and his daughter saw him brush away a tear, while her own fell fast.

"Oh! how I wish that he had never accepted it!" she exclaimed.

"My child, let us rather try to say, with the Shunnamite, 'It is well.'† But Mr. Goulding *has* kindness, Ellen, great kindness; it is that we were speaking of. When there could no longer be a doubt that the ship your brother went out in was lost,—when hope was over, and we no longer watched day after day with beating hearts for the letter that might bring some account of him, with what affectionate sympathy did my old friend write on the subject! How deeply did he regret he had made the offer which occasioned our sorrow, and how considerately has he, every year since, sent us a sum of money, lest pecuniary difficulties might aggravate our distress!"

"True, papa, and I am not ungrateful for all this. But I fear Mr. Goulding has now forgotten us. Months

* Isa. lvii. 1.

† 2 Kings iv. 26.

have elapsed since the usual time for the arrival of the remittance, and it has not come, neither any answer to your letter to him. Then, dearest papa, my fears are confirmed by there being no reply to the letter which Doctor Crofts and I had such difficulty in getting you to write to Mr. Goulding's agent in London, supposing that the delay might be occasioned by some remissness on his part."

"And probably was, my child, by some unintentional remissness," answered her father. "It was against my own wish, and just to please you and the doctor, that I applied to him. It seemed to me too like soliciting, and I think the Christian should sooner labour with his own hands; but we may yet hear from him."

"And if we do not, papa?"

"If we do not, Ellen, we will still trust in God, and execute the little plan we have laid down;" and again she thought she heard him sigh, but just then a quick heavy step passed the window, and the well-known knock of the postman at the hall-door followed.

Mr. Waring started; his pale wasted features were lit up with hope while he said, "Ah! here it comes, Ellen." Though the same feeling was awakened in his daughter's mind, and she too thought, "Here it comes, the letter that will remove all our difficulties," she suppressed it as well as she could for fear of disappointment, and quietly answering, "It is probably only the newspaper," waited till the servant went to the door and brought in a letter, a London letter too, addressed in the agent's well-known writing.

The old gentleman's hand shook so that he could scarcely open it. "I do not know where my spectacles

are; read it, my dear," he said, unwilling to have his agitation observed. Ellen did so; the contents were brief, but sufficient to quench every spark of hope which its arrival had awakened:—

"Dear Sir,—It is not in my power to remit the money you write about, not having received directions from India to that effect. I am sorry you are likely to suffer inconvenience, but as another person is expected from Mr. Goulding, to take my place, and manage his affairs in London, any further application to me will be useless. Yours, etc."

The father and daughter remained silent for some time after the perusal of this letter, nor could Ellen venture to look at her parent, lest she should see him overwhelmed by the loss of almost every earthly comfort which she knew was involved in the news it contained. When at last she did so, he was leaning back in his arm-chair, his eyes raised upwards, and a smile upon his countenance. Not one sigh had she heard pass his lips, but concluded that he had breathed it by what followed. In a low voice she heard him say,—“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”*

“ Oh shame upon thee, listless heart,
So sad a sigh to heave,
As if thy Saviour had no part
In thoughts that make thee grieve;
As if along his lonesome way
He had not borne for thee
Sad languor through the summer day,
Storms on the wintry sea!

* 1 Pet. ii. 21.

Then grudge not thou the anguish keen
 Which makes thee like thy Lord ;
 And learn to quit, with eye serene,
 Thy heart's ideal hoard."

"May God give me also grace to say, Thy will be done," thought Ellen, "and to help and comfort my dear parent!" "Papa," she then said, "I do think, now that expectation from others is over, and we must look to ourselves for help, we shall have more peace of mind."

"Look to ourselves, my child!" he cried, "no; let us look to God only for peace of mind, and for everything that is good. 'When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?' * Ellen, within the last few minutes, such precious promises of our heavenly Father's constant care over his people have been brought to my thoughts, that I am more than resigned, —I am happy; and I may truly say, 'Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.' "†

Ellen offered up a silent prayer for such faith as her father enjoyed, and then led the conversation to their plan for the future, though not a pleasant one; rightly judging that the sooner their minds became familiarized to it the better. "We must give up this house at once," she said, with an effort to speak calmly, "and remove to lodgings."

Mr. Waring looked all round the apartment; it was that in which he had enjoyed the happiest hours of his life; where the little family circle had once gathered about him, receiving and responding to the warmest affections of his heart. His eyes rested upon a small

* Job xxxiv. 29.

† Jer. xv. 16.

organ that stood in one corner. "Are we to take that with us?" he inquired, "shall we have room for it?"

"To be sure, papa, and also for your bookcase. How could you do without them? And there is quite a good-sized sitting-room in the lodgings which Dr. Crofts went to look at for us. But your garden!—Oh papa! how it grieves me to think of your being deprived of that!—the flowers you so delighted in; the vegetables you had such pleasure in cultivating! Then it was so absolutely necessary to your health that——" She could not proceed; the composure which she had assumed was gone; but Mr. Waring continued—

"That you don't think I can do without it. If my Father did not think that I could do without it, he would not take it from me, Ellen. How good of him to leave me my books and music still! and far, far beyond any other earthly blessing, to leave me you, my precious child."

This, though meant to console her, touched the chief cause of Ellen's sorrow, and she wept aloud. Some time before that at which our history commences, a person in whose hands was money belonging to Mr. Waring had failed in business, and on the loss of this last remnant of his property, perceiving that the remittance from India alone would not be sufficient to keep them in their usual way, Ellen undertook to teach music in the small town where they resided. Her father was an excellent musician, and had grounded her well in a scientific knowledge of the art, and when her determination became known, it seemed as if a musical mania had possessed the neighbourhood, her

services were in such requisition. The fact was, that even the world could appreciate the guileless integrity and benevolence of Mr. Waring's character, so that his pecuniary loss was universally regretted, and many availed themselves gladly of this way of alleviating it. But now the hope of further assistance from India was abandoned, and poor Ellen knew that even by leaving their comfortable home, and living with the most rigid economy in a small lodging, it was improbable that her utmost exertions would produce what was sufficient for their support. In that case what was to be done, but for her to leave her father and engage as governess in some gentleman's family? It was this thought which now caused her bitterest tears; and though he did not mention it, she had some idea that he also dreaded such a contingency.

"It is time to read, papa," she said, after a long silence, and handed him that blessed book whose Divine Author has said, "I am he that comforteth you." *

* * * * *

Ellen arose on the following day in better spirits. It is not easy for youth and health to despond; and under the influence of a bright spring morning, she felt as if circumstances were not quite so gloomy as they had appeared to be the night before. "As the days lengthen I shall be able, by rising earlier, and staying out later, to attend more scholars, and thus perhaps earn enough for our small requirements, so that we can remain together." With this pleasant thought in her mind she got ready for her daily avocation, and went to the garden to see her father before setting out. It was

* Isa. li. 12.

a bright and beautiful scene, well fitted to soothe and elevate her feelings. While gazing on it she remembered the following lines :—

The spring arose on that garden fair,
Like the spirit of love felt everywhere,
And each flower and herb on earth's dark breast
Woke from the dream of its wintry rest.
The snow-drop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mix'd with fresh odour sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.
Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissus, the fairest of them all,
And the hyacinth purple, and white, and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew
Of music so delicate, soft and intense,
It was felt like an odour within the sense;
And the jessamine faint, and the sweet tuberose,
The sweetest flower for scent that blows;
And all rare blossoms from every clime,
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

Old Mr. Waring was standing in the midst of these “rare blossoms ;” he had gathered some, and was making them into bouquets. “The morning is so fine, my child,” he said, when he saw Ellen, “that I shall be able to visit and read to a few of my poor neighbours, and will take these to them. Mrs. Brown will be delighted with these violets, and the lily of the valley is for Mary Miller ; she says she likes it not alone for its sweetness and beauty, but because her dear Saviour has likened himself to it.* Before long, there will be, on that sunny bank, ripe strawberries for our sick friends ; but—” suddenly recollecting himself, “I shall not be here then.”

* Cant. ii. 1.

"Who can tell that?" said some one who had just entered the garden unperceived. It was their friend Dr. Crofts.

"It is, at least, highly probable, doctor," replied Mr. Waring, handing him the letter which was received the preceding evening. Their friend did not seem so disconcerted by the perusal as they had expected.

"Well! not much hope from that quarter," he said. "Still, I think we shall manage; I think you will be able to keep your old home,—your nice garden, and—"

"Oh! how? *how?* dear Doctor," interrupted Ellen; while the old man's countenance lit up with an expression of surprise and joy.

"I will tell you," continued their friend, "I am come here for the purpose. Burton, whose bankruptcy occasioned the loss of your money—by the way, I never liked its being in his hands, the man was too speculative,—well! Burton has been left a legacy, with which he and his family are going off to Australia to seek their fortune. You know they have been in great distress. On hearing this news accidentally I went at once to consult my brother the lawyer. I cannot now enter into details; but, Mr. Waring, this proceeding must be stopped—it is probable, almost certain, my brother says, that your money can be recovered, and he will gladly manage the whole matter for you free of expense. You can then remain here, my dear sir, and, by this good little girl's assistance, go on pretty much as before."

"Oh! how happy, how thankful I am!" exclaimed Ellen. "To see my dearest father still comfortable, and—" but a glance at his countenance stopped her;

the expression of joy which Dr. Crofts' announcement had produced was gone, and he looked grave.

"Comfortable, my child!" he said. "Could I ever again be so if I occasioned the utter ruin of Mr. Burton and his large family?"

The doctor looked surprised and vexed. "Remember, sir," he replied, "that by doing so you avert ruin from yourself and your daughter. Well! well! I was not prepared for this, though I knew you had notions unlike the rest of the world."

"I hope so," answered the old gentleman, mildly; "for He whom I follow was 'not of the world.'"^{*}

"At least, consider the matter, Mr. Waring; do not act hastily."

"Certainly, my dear kind friend. Come into the house, and we can talk it over. I feel it to be important, and you will not wonder that I say, may God enable us to act in it according to his word!"

"Amen," responded Ellen; and she said it with perfect sincerity; though she sighed as this newly risen gleam of hope vanished. The teaching of music with a sorrowful heart is a wearisome avocation. Ellen was tired and depressed as she returned home in the evening. She met Dr. Crofts, who said abruptly, and in a tone of vexation,

"Well! there's an end of that matter. Ellen, don't be angry, but your father is a fool."

"I am not angry," she answered, "that my dear father, while acting in singleness of heart, should bear the same reproach that Paul experienced when he said,

* John xvii. 16.

'We are *fools* for Christ's sake.* Neither can you, doctor, I am sure, be angry with your old friend because he does what is according to his conscience."

"I *was* angry, and called his conduct in this matter chivalrous romance; but could not help in my heart loving and respecting him more than ever. At first I thought that years and trouble must have weakened his mind, but soon perceived it was only that,

"The soul's dark cottage, shatter'd and decay'd,
 Lets in new light through chinks which time has made."

"Yes, light from heaven," replied Ellen. "For 'though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.'"[†]

When Mr. Waring and his daughter were together that evening, he said to her,—"Our kind friend the doctor was displeased by my determination this morning with respect to my unfortunate creditor; did you disapprove of it, Ellen?"

"Disapprove of your obeying the dictates of your conscience, papa! could you suppose it?"

"No, my child, though your own interest was deeply involved. I did not explain all the motives which influenced my conduct, to the doctor; my poor friend could scarcely enter into them—but I should like to have you fully understand them."

"So should I, for I cannot do so yet, though I am certain they are good. Please tell me, could you not with strict justice claim the sum which Burton owes you?"

"Certainly; and now listen to my thoughts on this

* 1 Cor. iv. 10.

† 2 Cor. iv. 16.

point. I believe that the character of God's people is formed by the revelation of himself which he gives them: under the law the prominent feature of his revealed character was justice; *then*, dear Ellen, I could have demanded my right from Mr. Burton, whatever were the consequences to him,—‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But under the present dispensation what is the prominent feature of God’s revealed character? Oh! love, wondrous love; and grace, exceedingly rich grace. In the blessed gospel ‘God commendeth his love toward us, in that, *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us.—*When we were enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.’* Now if God so loved us, how ought we to love one another.”

“I see, papa, and trust I feel it too, as I never did before,” said Ellen.

“Well, my child, if we do feel this wonderful revelation of love, can we any longer act upon the principle of ‘an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth?’ It is one of perfect equity; but does our Lord allow his people to rest in it? No; ‘But, (he adds) I say unto you, that ye resist not evil;’ and proceeds to illustrate the beautiful precept by instances of the patient suffering of wrong.† And why is the law thus altered for the Christian? Because grace, free undeserved grace is the dealing of his heavenly Father with him.”

“I think I understand you now, dear father, though the world cannot,” said Ellen.

* Rom. v. 8, 10.

† Matt. v.

"No, the world cannot, though it is a doctrine so plainly and repeatedly laid down in the word. He who takes this position in the world ever so humbly, must calculate on being accounted void of common sense. But this signifies little if we can but be faithful to it. Oh! Ellen, to have our hearts filled with love to God, and to every creature around us! It would be heaven begun here, for the atmosphere of heaven is love!"

A long silence followed, which was broken by Mr. Waring. "Earthly concerns must be attended to in their due season," he said. "I have, my child, thought of a little plan which may assist us, and lessen your labour, which, I fear, is too much for you. If our neighbours will intrust some of their young children to me every day for a short time, I can teach them the elements of grammar, geography, and a few other useful things, at the same time trying to impart Scriptural knowledge. Oh! it would be a nice opportunity of endeavouring to make good impressions on their youthful minds."

"You, papa!" exclaimed Ellen. "You! known to be one of the best scholars in the country. You! a gentleman by birth and education, to employ yourself in the drudgery of teaching babies."

He looked at her with surprise. "It would be but an amusement; and would you say that it implicated my dignity? Oh! Ellen, remember who it was that said, 'Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me.'"^{*}

"Well, my father," she replied, "at least let us not speak of it now. There is still too much of pride, and other wrong feelings in my heart. We can discuss the

* Matt. xix. 14.

matter when we are settled in our new abode, and the sooner that is done the better."

But for some days Dr. Crofts, who was to arrange this move for them, did not appear, and when Ellen inquired for him at his house, she heard from his wife that he had gone from home on business, and was expected to return the next evening. When she saw him, she begged that he would kindly expedite the change for them, as she thought her father would be better when it was over, and he did not seem well. She was surprised by her friend saying,—“No, we must put it off a little longer. The fact is, I have still a faint lingering hope that it may yet be avoided.”

“What is that?” inquired Ellen. “For my part, I am tired of hoping.”

“I have been in London,” the doctor continued, “and while there, called on Mr. Goulding’s agent, told him how your father was situated, and entreated him to look over his employer’s letters, in case there might be some reference to the remittance which he had forgotten. He assured me this was not the case; but I succeeded in interesting him in the matter, and he has promised that the moment the gentleman arrives who is for the future to manage Mr. Goulding’s mercantile affairs in London, he will find out if there be any message to your father, and write at once to let us know. Even should it not be so, the new agent is, he says, a particular friend of Mr. Goulding’s, and might perhaps act on his own responsibility; so you see, Ellen, I *have* a hope.”

“A very vague one,” Ellen replied; “but you, kind friend, have done all you could.”

"But I must mention one thing more," said the doctor. "It is strange, but this new gentleman's name is the same as your own. Has your father any relative in India called Waring?"

"I believe not. It is, it *can* be no more than an accidental coincidence. Let us say nothing of this to my father, sir. I will delay the move as you wish, but I hope nothing." Notwithstanding this assurance, the poor girl's mind was more than ever agitated by conflicting hopes and fears, though she scarcely knew of what. Never before did her heart so leap at the sound of "the twanging horn" which announced the arrival of the mail. Never before did she wait with such breathless, speechless anxiety for the knock of him

"Who comes, the herald of a noisy world,
News from all nations lumbering at his back."

At length Dr. Crofts told her that he had seen in the newspaper the arrival of the vessel in which Mr. Goulding's friend was expected. That evening she could not remain quiet for a moment; her father, who had given up looking for distant tidings, was sleeping tranquilly in his arm-chair, when the guard's horn was heard.

"I hope he will not awaken till there is no chance of a letter," thought Ellen; but just then, and long before the usual time, there came the well-known sound—even the postman's knock. Puzzled, surprised, she glided out and opened the door herself. It was a wet, dark evening; the postman had a lantern, and she perceived a tall figure muffled in a cloak standing with him.

"No letter, ma'am," said the man. "This gentleman

came in the coach, and I came to show him your house," turning at the same time his lantern so as to let its light shine on the features of the stranger. Ellen looked, started, and uttered a faint scream. The stranger entered and caught her in his arms, saying, "My sister, dear sister, where is my father?"

Even in what we may almost term the *agonies* of her delight, Ellen had presence of mind enough to intimate the necessity there was for not letting their parent learn too suddenly this unlooked-for happiness. With noiseless step the brother and sister entered the room where he was still asleep. Richard stood at some distance, but Ellen came just before him with a candle in her hand. He opened his eyes and looked at her. "I thought I heard the postman's knock," he said. "You look very happy, my dear, did any letters come?"

"No letter, papa, still I *am* very happy; I have heard news."

He started up. "What news? Tell me at once."

"Of my brother, of Richard—he lives;" and his long-lost son was in his arms.

* * * *

From what has already appeared of Mr. Waring's character, it is hardly necessary to add, that in all his joy he did not forget the thanks which were due to that Being who had not only restored his long-lamented son to him, but also his home and the blessings of a competent provision.

"I will tell you nothing of myself to-night," said Richard, "but that I and three others of the crew were saved when our ship was wrecked on the African coast. A long captivity and various other adventures followed,

with an account of which I hope to entertain my dear father and sister many a winter evening. How they will join me in praise to Him who brought me through all, till I got some months ago to India, and joined our friend Mr. Goulding ! Need I say with what pleasure he received me ? He was going up the country on business, and made me accompany him. We were unavoidably detained much longer than we anticipated, which was the cause of your not hearing. My health had suffered so much by the hardships of my sojourn in Africa, that on our return to Calcutta the physicians recommended my native climate as the best remedy. Mr. Goulding appointed me to manage his business in London. He has sent you both many kind messages, and kind presents also ; and if I have not brought home bags of gold, as great adventurers are expected to do, I shall be able, with God's blessing, to make you comfortable."

" With *his* blessing we must be comfortable whatever betide," said Mr. Waring. " And, my children, shall not the wonderful mercies we have just experienced lead us to exercise unlimited confidence in his goodness evermore ? Let us remember them with thankfulness ; and as for past trials, of them may we still be able to say,

" Dear Lord, in memory's fondest place
I shrine those seasons sad,
When, looking up, I saw thy face
In kind austereness clad.
I would not miss one sigh or tear,
Heart-pang, or throbbing brow ;
Sweet was the chastisement severe,
And sweet its memory now."

THE RIVAL CRUSADES.

NATIONS, like individuals, are liable to paroxysms of fever, and never does the disease cause such excitement as when "the religious element" in the natural heart is the seat of the attack. It is worthy of remark that true religion, that which springs from the work of the eternal Spirit, in his application of the gospel of Christ to the sinner's heart, is calm, peaceful, and unostentatious, when most lively and operative. The zeal it kindles is too loving to be noisy, too pure for earthly parade; and its labours await their public recognition and reward, until the day when all secrets will be revealed, and all crowns cast before Him whose holy self-renouncing love originates the active response of his grateful people.

But not so the natural religion by which men in all ages have been ruled or led. A secret struggling consciousness of sin has at times disturbed the comfort of mankind under all circumstances, and the ingenuity of spiritual empirics has been largely taxed to prescribe some successful remedy less obnoxious to human pride, than the simple balm prepared, and offered by the Divine and "good Physician."

The church of Rome, though for some centuries

exclusively cultivating the “wisdom of the serpent” in the management of her spiritual supremacy, had yet, in the close of the eleventh century, to strike out from the apparent necessities of the times a new and popular method of salvation, and never had the “voice of the church” sounded so attractive, or received such universal proof of obedience, as when inviting sinners to win heaven by their own meritorious deeds.

A schism at that time disturbed the peace of the pontificate. Urban the Second had been elected by his partisans in opposition to Guibert, the protégé of the emperor Henry the Fourth, and the tiara somewhat tottered on the new head of the church. Some bold stroke of policy was desirable to avert men’s attention from ecclesiastical divisions, and to surround with popular favour the upholder of spiritual in opposition to temporal power.

The pope’s meditations were one day disturbed by an appropriate idea. It approached in the diminutive form of a bare-footed palmer just returned from the Holy Land. He leaned upon his huge crucifix, and delivered the message with which he supposed himself Divinely commissioned.

Jerusalem, the fair city, the scene of the most august life and the most accursed death, where pilgrims wandered in expiatory penance when their troubled consciences had exhausted the church’s remedies at home, was in the possession of the infidel, and not under the sway of the self-elected mother and mistress of the world. Christian pilgrims were insulted and persecuted on the soil which had been consecrated by the footsteps of their Lord. His followers must avenge the wrong,

and make the holy places their own by conquest, and the standard of the cross must be unfurled over the sacred sepulchre. Revenge and conquest!—could the bold barons of Europe resist such enticing watchwords? and could not the papal benediction consecrate them to a holy cause?

Rome had gradually laid aside from her counsels the true word which says that “not many” of the “wise” and “mighty” of this world are called, and that the flock of God in each generation is but a “little flock;” and it was easy for her to proclaim to the most princely, powerful, martial spirits of the age, that they were not only the staff and stay of Christendom, but that to them was committed the extension of the kingdom of Christ, and that on their own valour and devotion depended the salvation of their souls.

After several conferences with Peter the Hermit, Urban decisively announced it as his duty to kindle the flames of war. Sanctioned by his high authority, the fanatical palmer traversed Europe to prepare combustibles, and after a few minor preparations in concert with Bohemond, prince of Tarentum, (whose alienated Italian states also needed some powerful interference,) the eloquence of the pontiff at the great Council of Clermont, applied the match and secured the memorable explosion.

“To you,” said the successor of St. Peter, the servant of the servants of Christ, after alluding to the sins and strifes in which his hearers were known to indulge; “to you, now, suffering this perilous shipwreck of sin, a secure haven of rest is offered A station of perpetual safety will be awarded you, for the exertion

of a trifling labour against the Turks The cause of these labours will be charity, if thus, warned by the commands of God, you lay down your lives for the brethren; the wages of charity will be the grace of God; the grace of God is followed by eternal life. Go then prosperously; go then with confidence to attack the enemies of God You will be extolled throughout all ages, if you rescue your brethren from danger Let such as are going to fight for Christianity put the form of the cross upon their garments, that they may outwardly demonstrate the love arising from their inward faith; enjoying by the gift of God, and the privilege of St. Peter, absolution from all their crimes: let this, in the meantime, soothe the labours of their journey, satisfied that they shall after death obtain the advantages of a blessed martyrdom Go, soldiers, everywhere renowned in fame, go and subdue these dastardly nations. Let the noted valour of the French advance, which, accompanied by adjoining nations, shall affright the whole world by the terror of its name No doubt you must by much tribulation enter the kingdom of God Expect through the firmness of your faith even horrible punishments, that so, if it be necessary, you may redeem your souls at the expense of your bodies God will be gracious to those who undertake this expedition, that they may have a favourable year, both in abundance of produce, and in serenity of season. Those who die will enter the mansions of heaven, and those who live shall behold the sepulchre of the Lord: and what can be greater happiness? Blessed are they who, called to these occupations, shall inherit such a recompence; fortunate are those who are

led to such a conflict, that they may partake of such rewards."

The listening multitude seemed moved as one man; bishops, priests and friars, nobles, knights and vassals, plumed warriors and bare-footed beggars, yielded simultaneously to the mighty fanaticism. "God wills it! God wills it!" they shouted with one accord, and the pope, raising his hands and eyes to heaven, added, "Dearest brethren, to-day is verified the Scriptural promise, that where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, he will be with them. The power of God can alone have caused this unanimity of sentiment. Let the very words, then, which his Spirit dictated be your cry of war Let every one mark on his breast the sign of our Lord's cross, in order that the saying may be fulfilled, He who takes up the cross and follows me, is worthy of me."

Never before had a method so congenial been discovered for comforting consciences and expiating crimes. Now no man capable of bearing arms need quail before his confessor, nor, whatever his character, despair of deserving the highest realms of glory. Only the weak, the sick, the helpless, could now be in danger of perdition; and purgatory, that "*tierra del fuego incognita*," which about the year 1140 had been authoritatively added to the papal dominions, was at once expunged from the personal creed of the crusader. No marvel, then, that pomp and display and tumult distinguished a religious movement, animate only with the native corruptions of the heart, and as devoid of the spirit of truth, as the empty sepulchre for the possession of which it was to contend.

"Now, this is a right valiant way to take up the cross," said a stalwart knight, who had long winced at the penances of his priestly confessor. "No more muttering of prayers in a cell, but a gallant passage of arms, and the blood of the paynim foe, to wipe off all scores, once and for ever."

"It is a proper honourable way to do pilgrimage," cried another. "No more begging the way through starvation and shame, but claiming the right with our trusty swords to worship God, as belted knights and brave men should, in the conquered holy place."

"It is payment of all my vexatious debts," said the spendthrift runagate. "This cross is receipt in full from God and man, and the pledge redeemed shall soon make both my debtors in their turn."

And thus multitudes of warrior missionaries, with weapons supremely carnal, and mighty through superstition to the pulling down of Moslem pride and garrisoned fortresses, prepared in coat of mail to enlighten the darkness of Palestine with the European transformation of the Christianity which ten centuries before had sprung from its sacred scenes. The new way of salvation, revenge on the infidel and the conquest of Jerusalem, became household words from the castle to the cottage, and would-be benefactors of their country and mankind, lisped in the cradle the lessons taught in the language and conduct of their sires.

But not few were the noble spirits and loving hearts caught in the dazzling snare; and the costly sacrifice of domestic ties left as many martyrs at home as filled the ranks of the departing host. An illustration of

this feature in the temper of the times was afforded in the family of D'Evreux. The contagion spread to Normandy, and thence to England; and Anglo-Norman youths, panting to earn their spurs on consecrated ground, hastened to join the standard of duke Robert, who was preparing his retinue for the expedition.

Guy D'Evreux was the only son of a widowed mother, a woman of strong and tender feeling, whose deepest sin ever mourned to her arrogant confessor, was affection too nearly idolatrous for her noble boy. The wild eloquence of the itinerating firebrand Peter the Hermit reached his feudal hall, and Guy marked the change it wrought in his gentle mother. He had hitherto been docile and obedient to her every wish and will, and much cause had the vassal families on his domain to prize the influence which had contributed largely to their liberty and comfort. Guy felt the thrill of ambition, the stimulus of probable fame, and moreover he had sinned. His conscience defied the opiates of penance, and dreamed painfully of future judgment. But his lonely, loving mother, frail in health, timid and unprotected in the infirmities of advancing years!—must the young oak tear away from the ivy, and leave it dying on the ground? No; filial duty decided on the sacrifice of the great opportunity, and while all the world was rising in arms, Guy assured his mother of his resolve to remain at home. He had done more than conquer a city; he had conquered the natural inclination of a brave young spirit.

But no answering smile rewarded his affectionate self-denial, and he was sorcely disappointed to see the

pale cheek become paler still, and to feel the coldness of death steal through the hand that should have returned the fond clasp of his own. The secret was soon divulged. The church had spoken, and recognised no bond too sacred for her word to sever; the confessor had prescribed, and the parent and child were taught that their salvation depended on unquestioning obedience. The presumptuous private judgment of the young chief must be crushed in this symptom of budding independence, and his own mother must affix to his arm, in the presence of his faithful retainers, the badge of devotion to the one idea which agitated Christendom.

She worked his new banner with the motto of Clermont, shedding a tear for every stitch, and doing a penance for every tear; and when it was unfurled above his head as he stood among his brave volunteers, “God wills it!” shouted the triumphant priest, “God wills it!” echoed the crusaders, “God wills it!” softly murmured the broken-hearted mother.

There was one quiet old man who stood gazing sorrowfully on the scene, for he had spent too many profitable years in the scriptorium, transcribing the book of God, to sympathize in the popular delusion. Moreover, he wore a cross on his back, in token of having performed pilgrimage, and had wept over the sepulchre of Christ, but had not found peace to his conscience until he got home again, and then unexpectedly discovered its secret in a line of his Latin manuscript.

He observed the moral conflict too evidently working fearfully in the heroic mother of D'Evreux, and he

thought of Him who said, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." "And thou too, my son," said he, when opportunity favoured for a word with the young crusader, "art thou also caught with this high-sounding mission? Knowest thou not that it was said to him who drew the sword in the cause of Christ, 'They that take the sword shall perish with the sword?'"

"What matters that, sir Palmer, if it open to my soul the gates of heaven? Sin is on my conscience, and, as an obedient son of our holy church, I go to rid it of its load at the sepulchre of Christ."

"Alas! my son, I made my weary pilgrimage with the same intent, but when I reached the tomb, behold he was not there, he was risen; why sought I the living among the dead? And it was at the spot from whence I had first set out, that I learned his omnipresence and ever-living intercession, and that Christ's religion is not places and human toils, but faith in his atoning blood, and love active in his service after his own example."

"If this be so," said D'Evreux, "the whole world is wrong. Why dost thou not come forth and preach down the misled zeal which one man's fiery tongue has kindled?"

"It is useless, for his doctrines have an echo in every heart, while those of the holy Nazarene oppose man's natural inclinations. True, the world is wrong, and one man may lead it in the way of any pleasant delusion, but all the saints in heaven and earth cannot urge it one step in the path of truth. It was by one man that sin entered the world, and all your armed hosts cannot drive it out again."

"Then we must expiate it each for himself," said D'Evreux.

"I would fain write upon thy heart the good words that tell how that work can alone be done," said the old monk, gazing kindly on the youth. "With them my pen has illuminated many a vellum, since it pleased God to transfer their experience to my soul. They run thus: 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'"

"Methinks they would have marred his holiness's sermon," said D'Evreux; "pity he did not apply to thee for a text. But if the blood of the infidel fail my purpose, I will back to thee for a better lesson."

Very few in those dark days could have given such a lesson, but here and there the sacred oracles had found their way from the transcriber's pen to his touched heart, and lodged there in one happy hour the peace which the whole preceding life had been one scene of unceasing toil to win. But the time had not come for the rising of the Reformation's "morning star," in the person of a British Wycliffe, nor for that of an unsettling sun, in the conversion of a German Luther.

The sooner three hundred thousand armed fanatics carried their zeal out of Christendom, the better for the remaining community; and under the leadership of four chosen generals, the wildest rabble that ever congregated from the lowest grades of the nations commenced their eastward journey. The frightful results of the doctrines of penance and indulgence, the legitimate fruit of the pope's broad-cast seed, now sprang forth in unrestrained abundance, and crimes and cruelties of the most revolting character marked the progress of men who bore

the outward sign of the cross, and were thus delivered in imagination from all the penalties and consequences of sin, and freed from the obligations of all law, whether human or Divine. A few miserable months, and all excepting twenty thousand of these profane adventurers, having provoked the retaliation of the nations through which they passed, slept on the plains of Europe, or dyed its rivers with their blood.

Then, relieved of this disorderly multitude, the stately squadrons of Europe's early chivalry began their march in all the pomp of feudal grandeur. Nothing was omitted that could add to the imposing solemnity of consecration to the cause. Miracles were said to inaugurate and assist the expedition, and continually to animate the failing faith of the impatient host, when calamity and reverses checked their progress.

The lady D'Evereux and her son had parted. He, amidst the exciting glitter of the martial array, could not estimate the passive endurance of her desolate heart, as she resigned herself to solitude and discipline, to crush the regrets and rebellings of maternal love. Her religion, in rigid conformity to the instructions of "the church," was at the best an unsatisfying phantom, a cold substitute for that of which it had robbed her; exacting, peacless—its present unlovely, its future uncertain, excepting only and always to the favoured crusader.

Survivor still through famine, pestilence, and the casualties of war, Guy D'Evreux shared in the wild enthusiasm of the army when it approached within sight of the holy city. Then came the mighty struggle when man to man, professing Christian and infidel,

battled for the mastery of the disputed walls. And when at last victory crowned the almost superhuman valour of the European troops, and fainting Moslems implored for quarter, then if ever was the moment to prove if mercy had a place in the crusader's creed. But no ; down went the helpless, the terrified, the innocent with their brave defenders, in one great slaughter before the invader's sword ; and if human blood could atone for sin, the world might have been absolved that fearful day.

Sick and exhausted with exertion and wounds, D'Evreux was borne to the holy sepulchre, whither the fanatical warriors hastened to give thanks for their cruel conquest. Then the words of the Norman pilgrim, who had here sought in vain for peace, recurred to his memory—" He is not here, he is risen !" Alas ! Guy also was unsatisfied ; his hopes had no foundation. Godfrey of Bouillon, the leader of the army, hastily conferred the honour of knighthood on the expiring youth. " My brave friend," said he, " thou hast nobly won thy spurs, and must live to wear them ; I have marked thy dauntless valour. Arise, Sir Guy D'Evreux."

Guy had seen the sepulchre of Christ, the promised reward of those who lived, and, if a pope spoke truly, he was about to attain the mansions promised to those who died. He had received the praise of his princely chief,—and was not all this sufficient ? Alas, no ! all was forgotten in the desire to recall the better words which had once fallen unheeded on his ear—of blood, not the blood of conquered enemies, but the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin ; and if a hope cheered the last moments of the dying knight,

it was not in valour nor conquest, nor even in the rescued city and sepulchre; it was in Jesus and his “one offering of himself once for all.”

The news of her son’s death was conveyed with assurances of his unsurpassed bravery to the mourner at home, whereupon she retired to a convent, erected a cross-legged effigy to the memory of D’Evreux, bequeathed her estates to “the church,” and died.

Short was the triumph of the warrior mission. Jerusalem was retaken by Saladin, and the crescent has never ceased since to float where fanaticism and not Christianity had planted the cross. If the work had been of God, who should have hindered it? but being entirely of man, it came to nought.

It is very pleasant to turn from such scenes of ignorance and folly, even though their record should not be forgotten, to those of better and happier times. The nineteenth century dawned upon a very different aspect of the nations from that which distinguished the period of the first crusade; but still in the midst of surrounding improvement, intellectually, socially, and nationally, two important existences remained unchanged. The human heart was still the fruitful source of sin and sorrow, and the church of Rome still plied it wherever opportunity permitted, with her manifold inventions and dangerous deceits. Her power to originate any extensive open movement was indeed crushed, but as the firm opponent of all better efforts, she remained influential and often successful still.

The word of God, the only antidote to sin and error, was now emancipated from long imprisonment, and the

gospel might be freely preached and heard in many lands ; it was welcomed joyfully to many a dark spot far and wide on the face of the earth, and was professedly the birthright of Britons after the struggle for civil and religious liberty in 1688, which made this island the stronghold of reformed Christianity.

But these very blessings originated a great and universal necessity ; men's minds were inquiring, and education could not satisfy them. Missions, beautiful and valuable as they might be, were insufficient. A Berean-spirit was abroad, and no longer could even truth be accepted on human testimony. Events reached a crisis, and a new crusade followed.

All pilgrimages must not be condemned with those of the "dark ages," nor are all pilgrims as mischievous as Peter the Hermit. A little more than seven hundred years after Peter had startled Europe to arms, a little light-footed pilgrim might be seen in a mountain district in Wales, hastening every week seven miles over hill and dale to one dear and much-frequented spot. It was no sepulchre forsaken of one whom it had once inclosed, nor was it any relic of departed glory ; but, under the interpreting Spirit, who directs and blesses the humble applicant, it contained the food of resurrection life, the recognised voice of an ever-living friend.

But a week of storm and torrent suddenly checked the unwearied feet of the little pilgrim, and revealed the fact of her unostentatious diligence and zeal. The text was unlearned, the chapter unstudied, and her grief and regret occasioned the discovery that God's word was seven miles distant from the village in which

she dwelt. The kind pastor mourned over this scarcity of Bibles, and carried his appeal for help to the great Head of the church himself, who failed not to hear and attend. It was not mockery to believe that where two or three met together truly in his name, he was in the midst to guide and bless their counsels. The cross was again the badge of a cause, not embroidered on robes and banners, to flaunt in high and proud procession before the eyes of the world, but engraven with secret power on the heart and life, the true spring of all influential effort for the glory of God and the benefit of man.

A warfare was again proclaimed, and the sword must be drawn. A “two-edged sword,” sharp, bright and piercing, which devoted martyrs had long since dislodged from its classic scabbard, must be multiplied by millions for every hand that could grasp it. There was a “holy city,” a “heavenly Jerusalem,” to which men’s attention must be more extensively directed. It was to be won by all who would follow the prescribed route, and be true to their Divine Leader; for he had consecrated “a new and living way,” and promised that his followers should be “more than conquerors through him who loved” and led “them.” But into this city shall in no wise enter “anything that defileth or maketh a lie,” and instead of licence to sin, the strongest bond by which man can be pledged to “deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts,” is twined around his heart, when “the love of God is shed abroad” there “by the Holy Ghost,” and he becomes a soldier of Jesus Christ. There were no meritorious deeds (falsely so called) to be done in order to deserve admission to “the mansions

of heaven ;" all such work was "finished," and it remained only to appropriate by faith the infinite merit of Him who did it. Blood was indeed needful, but it was already shed, and "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin," for "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

In contrast with the crusade of earlier times, when only the great and noble, the strong and active were to be partakers of its benefits, now the poor and lowly, the weak and suffering, childhood and old age, were the special objects of interest in this great movement. And calmly, quietly, humbly it began, and continued and prospered. It was of God, and who could hinder it ? It was his will and pleasure that the little rivulet which sprang from the mountain, should not only meander in fertilizing richness among neighbouring districts, but should swell and grow, until supplies should be launched upon its bosom, for the island, "the empire, and the world !" Long had the cheap Bible lingered in the rear of a translated Bible. To present it almost freely, and often entirely so, to all men, that sinners of every colour, kindred, tongue, and people, may read in their own language, the wonderful works of God, has been the great achievement of the nineteenth century. It is the mightiest crusade against sin, the world, and the devil, that has ever been inaugurated on earth since the birth of Jesus Christ. It is significant of no rending of human ties, or crushing of natural affections ; but it cements them and consecrates them all to the glory of Him, who has found in them the most touching illustrations of his own love to fallen man. It would array the soldiers of the cross on the side of

submission to lawful authority, unselfish regard to the interests of others, loyalty, justice, filial obedience, and fraternal love. It would make home the type of heaven, and model domestic life after the example of the Husband, the Father, the Guide, in "the household of faith." Such is its individual aspect as it spreads on its mission of mercy under the direction of the Spirit of God, to gather out from among all nations a people for his name. It can never go forth to return void, "but shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it," saith the Lord God.

In its corporate capacity, the British and Foreign Bible Society is the best earthly comforter and help to the missionary who toils day by day in his distant exile, teaching and testifying that Jesus is the Christ. It enables him to call on men to believe, not the missionary but God, and to present them with the means of testing the accuracy of his instruction. The larger the demand for the word of God, the stronger the proof that the teacher is faithful to his solemn trust. He now feels, too, that his work will not fail with his voice, nor pass away with his precarious life, but that with the word of God and his blessing, it has the root and nourishment of spiritual life.

It is the silent, formidable, irresistible influence on society, legislation, and national progress, that the church of Rome most trembles to meet. She can unsay what man has said; she can overwhelm with authorities, and slide through arguments on any human foundation; but the word of God without note or comment, unadulterated with her traditional instructions, she never has met, she never can dare to meet. The day of its

prohibition is gradually waning, and now to question and criticise its inspiration is the new deceit of the day. May God strengthen his Davids against this Philistine also ! and, clothing them in the panoply he has himself provided, enable them not only to stand their ground for their own salvation, but to invade and conquer, with their beautiful weapon of warfare, not carnal, but mighty through God, the dominions of sin and error by whatever name they may be called, to the unspeakable happiness of many who still sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to his own everlasting glory.

And when the "holy city," the "new Jerusalem," shall indeed be in sight, there shall a "multitude whom no man can number," beautiful in the likeness of Jesus, and radiant in the glory of God, be the ever-living monuments of that world-wide blessing, that true crusade, which has sown the good seed of the kingdom through the field of the world, and then shall they who sow and they who reap rejoice together.

L. E. G.

THE WATCHER BY THE WAYSIDE.

(WEG-WARTEN).

THE traveller in Switzerland a floweret oft may see,
That richly by the wayside blooms, uncultured, wild,
and free;

It lifts its modest little head, and turns its calm blue eye
—Bright as the stars that peep at eve from out a
clouded sky—

With such a gay and cheerful glance to every passer-by.

Not in the garden's shelter'd nook is its fair presence
found,

Where order smiles on every group, and sister flowers
abound;

Along the hot and dusty road, where all looks dry and
bare,

With glad contentedness it takes its lowly station there,
And willingly its fragrance flings upon the summer air.

Expressive is the German name our favourite has
obtain'd;

The "Watcher by the Wayside" is the title it has gain'd;
And beautiful to us appears the mission it fulfils,
And hallow'd are the teachings which it silently instils
In hearts that sometimes droop and sigh because of life's
stern ills.

While traversing our toilsome path, far from our home
and rest,
By varied roughnesses and cares, sore burden'd and
depress'd,
How often on our aching sight some cheering promise
beams,
Or some unlook'd-for favour in the waste around us
gleams !
And in a moment, oh how changed the road before us
seems !

Yes, mercies cluster like sweet flowers where'er our
footsteps tread,
Only we do not always see the gifts for us outspread ;
We murmur at the troubles that we meet as we advance,
And gaze on our discomforts till their number we enhance ;
But common wayside blessings oft escape our careless
glance.

Yet still the thoroughfare of life continuously they gem,
And weary spirits grow refresh'd while recognising
them.

O God of beauty and of love, we thank thee for these
flowers,
Nurtured in dry and sterile spots, by sunshine and by
showers :
These daily mercies springing up to cheer this world of
ours.

A. M.

NORTH AMERICAN FLOWERS.

CATLIN, the traveller among the Indians, has given the most glowing accounts of the flowers on the prairies of North America. On one occasion he says,—“The scenery of this day’s travel was exceedingly beautiful, and our canoe was often to the shore, upon which we stepped to admire the endless variety of wild flowers, ‘wasting their sweetness on the desert air,’ and the abundance of delicious fruits that were about us. Whilst wandering through the high grass, the wild sunflowers and voluptuous lilies were in abundance; and here and there in every direction there were little copses and clusters of plum-trees, and gooseberries, and wild currants, loaded down with their fruit: and amongst these, to sweeten the atmosphere and add a charm to the effect, the wild-rose bushes seemed planted in beds and in hedges, and everywhere were decked out in all the glory of their delicate tints, and shedding sweet aroma to every breath of air that passed over them.”

In so wide a territory as North America, the floral productions are as various as they are numerous. A few specimens are given in our engraving.



NORTH AMERICAN

THE TRUMPET CREEPER (*Bignonia radicans*) bears a long swelling tubed flower, shaped somewhat like a trumpet, whence its name. It is a climbing plant, reaching to a considerable height, and exhibiting its splendid blossoms to the topmost stem. The prevailing colours are, an orange exterior and a scarlet interior surface. The flowers are produced in large bunches. When intermixed with evergreens on lattice-work, a very rich effect is produced.

The small, pretty flowers of the PHLOX grow in a pyramidal form. Pink is the usual colour, though purple, red, cerulean blue, and other varieties are to be seen. A single specimen was received from North America about a century ago; since then other kinds have been imported, until not less than fifty are now found in the English garden. Its native soil is chiefly Pennsylvania and the north-western states of America.

Madia elegans, or the ELEGANT MADIA, has a bright yellow flower, with an interior row of crimson spots. It blooms early in its own country, and continues in blossom nearly all the year. It was introduced into the Horticultural Society's garden in 1831.

The TWO-FOLD MONARDA (*Monarda didyma*) is a hardy aromatic plant, named after a Spanish physician. It displays whorls of large brilliant crimson flowers in autumn. The aborigines of North America use its leaves to make a beverage similar to mint-tea; hence it is known as the Oswega tea-plant.

The DOWNY AMERICAN WOODBINE (*Caprifolium pubescens*) climbs to the height of eight feet on trees and walls, covering them with dense foliage and large bunches of pretty saffron or orange-coloured flowers,

which are two-lipped and tubular. The bright green leaves turn a rich crimson on the approach of autumn.

The PURPLE FRINGED HABENARIA (*Habenaria fimbriata*) is found extensively in Canada and the United States. In the neighbourhood of Boston it attains to a great size. The flowers are fringed, and are of an uniform palish purple colour.

“Author of all, how bright thy glories shine!
How pure, how perfect is thy least design!”

MAUDE CROSBY, THE POOR COUSIN.

“ Yet, once more, grieve not at neglect ; hear me, to thy comfort
or rebuke ;

For, after all thy just complaint, the world is full of love.
No man yet deserved, who found not some to love him.”

“ How glad I am that everything is completed so nicely ! ” said Jemima Latham, as she and her sister Eliza sat together at the breakfast-room table, arranging flowers in several elegant vases and baskets which stood before them.

“ Yes,” said her sister, “ everything seems to have happened exactly as we wished it to do, does it not ? even the fine weather has come at the right time. I have just been in the drawing-room to water the flowers which came home last night, and I was really quite struck with the effect which the room produced. I am sure, mamma,” she continued, addressing a lady who sat near the window, engaged in making some trifling alteration to a silk dress, which hung over a chair by her side, “ neither you nor papa can now regret that we prevailed upon you to alter your plan, by having the new furniture this year instead of next.

First sight, you know, is everything; and I fancy that the Wilsons, like the rest of the world, think not a little of appearances."

"Very likely," replied the mother. "I can only say for myself, that though I do not by any means regret the expense and trouble which it has been to put the house in such good order, I shall be very glad when the visit is over. I never did like strangers, especially people who, I suppose, think themselves a little above me."

"Nonsense, mamma; I am sure the Wilsons do not think themselves above us—in fact, they are not so; though, perhaps, their style of living may hitherto have been rather different to ours; indeed, I am almost sure that papa is richer than Mr. Wilson, instead of poorer," replied Eliza. "Here, Jemima," she continued, filling with water a china basket which stood by her side, "here is this little basket to arrange for Mrs. Wilson's dressing-table. What shall we put in it? not anything very powerful; some people object to the scent of flowers in a bedroom. Suppose I fill it with nemophila, and just a few sprigs of Cape jasmine; the contrast of colours would be pretty, would it not?"

"Oh, I have an idea of my own for that basket," said her sister. "What do you think of filling it with the different varieties of Scotch rose, set off with these lovely, velvet-like shamrock-leaves? Mrs. Wilson is Irish, you know, and Mr. Wilson being Scotch, I think she would consider it a pretty compliment."

"Charming!" exclaimed Eliza; "really Jemima you are the luckiest girl I ever knew for good ideas. Here," said she, passing the basket across the table, as she saw

her sister commence arranging some of the dark rich leaves round a smiling little white rose, "you shall have all the credit to yourself: how lovely!"—but her admiration was cut short by a loud double knock at the front door,—it was the postman's.

"That never can be a letter to say they are not coming!" exclaimed Jemima; "how vexed I should be if it were!" and she threw down the flowers in her hand, and flew to the door of the room to be ready to receive the letter the moment the servant should take it in.

"It is for you, mamma," said she, inspecting the address, "not from the Wilsons, and yet I know the handwriting."

"Why it is from Maude Crosby!" said Eliza, passing the letter to her mother; "what can she have to say, I wonder?"

"Dear me," said Mrs. Latham, when she had arrived at the end of the first page, "what shall we do? Maude says that she is to have a holiday for a few days, and that, if it is convenient, she should be very glad to spend them with us, as she could not accept our last invitation."

"But it is *not* convenient," said Jemima, turning very red, and giving her head a toss of the most supreme contempt; "*of course* it is not convenient. You would not think of introducing Maude to the Wilsons, mamma, I should think."

"I am sure I do not know what to do," said Mrs. Latham, laying down the letter with an air of great perplexity; "I should be sorry to be unkind to Maude, and yet——" *

"Dear me, mamma," said Jemima, "I see no unkindness in it. Just write and say that it is not convenient at present, without giving any reason; we can have her by and by; in fact, we shall be glad of her in the autumn, when all the cutting out and fixing has to be done for the Industrial Society—she is very clever at that sort of thing; but the idea of introducing her to the Wilsons as our relation, is perfectly absurd."

"When does she wish to come?" said Eliza, taking up the letter, and commencing its perusal; "why, to-morrow morning, I declare. She says, 'Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I shall come to E—— by the morning omnibus, the day after to-morrow, and walk from thence to the Rook's-nest.' You must write immediately, mamma," she continued; "for if your letter does not go by the next post, it will not reach her before the omnibus leaves in the morning."

Jemima quickly produced writing materials, and Mrs. Latham was just settling herself to the ungracious task which she had to perform, when Eliza, picking up the envelope which had fallen unheeded on the ground, exclaimed, "Why, the letter has been delayed! Look at the date inside, mamma; surely it cannot have been detained a whole day!"

"It was written the day before yesterday," said her mother, "on Monday morning."

"Is it possible?" cried Jemima, snatching up the letter; "then she will be here to-day. I wonder what we are to do now;" and again the angry colour rose to her brow. "I do think Maude has no right to push herself upon us in this way; you will give her to understand that she must go back, of course, mamma."

"I am sure I do not know what to do," said Mrs. Latham; "as I said before, I do not like to be—Walter, go away, you must not come here; I am very busy," she added, as a fine manly boy, of some nine or ten summers, burst into the room, evidently full of an announcement he was about to make.

"But, mamma, just let me tell you this; there is cousin Maude coming up the avenue; we saw her from the nursery window. May we not go and meet her, and ask her to take us into the hay-fields? Susan says she shall not have time to go with us all the while the Miss Wilsons are here.

"Go away, Walter," said Jemima angrily, and without further ceremony she turned the boy out of the room, and locked the door.

"What do you mean to do, mamma?" said she, drawing herself up in front of her mother; "of course you will not let Maude remain."

"But what is to be done, Jemima? *I* cannot send her away; it is impossible. Her poor mother was my dearest friend, and though only my cousin, at one time we were like sisters. I sincerely wish she had not fixed upon to-day; but if she *must* go back, I cannot see her—I tell you that plainly."

"It was very unfortunate," said Eliza, "that she gave up being a morning governess; if she had not done so, we might have introduced her. Ladies of rank have been governesses before now; but to think of her being in a shop! Just fancy how dreadful it would be, when we drive to G—, if Emma and Sophia Wilson should wish for something at Mr. Sharpe's, and go in and see her again. We could not prevent it, you know."

" Well, mamma, will you trust the matter to me ? " said Jemima ; " I will manage it without troubling anyone. You said you had headache just now, so I shall give that as a reason for your not seeing her ; " and before Mrs. Latham had time to give utterance to the feeble remonstrance on her lips, Jemima had left the room on her errand.

The Lathams, as the reader may have already surmised, were a family who had risen, and were still endeavouring to rise in the world. Maude Crosby was a poor relation, and though by no means singular in that respect, was the only one who haunted them in the particular locality in which they had lately settled. Poor Maude ! her young life had been singularly destitute of joy, almost from her childhood saddened by many and heavy sorrows. Once she had had kind and tender parents, a loving brother, a happy though never a luxurious home ; but, one by one, death had deprived her of all these. The remainder of her youth she had passed, neglected and often despised, first as half-boarder, then as under teacher, in a second-rate school. Her natural qualities were not attractive ; she possessed neither beauty, talents, nor (what in many cases almost supplies the want of both) engaging and attractive manners. The trials which she had undergone, instead of softening, had only fretted and soured a disposition not perhaps naturally amiable, and thus she had entered upon the great journey of life with a cold, untender spirit, alike incapable either of gathering from without, or dispensing from within, that genial light and warmth which, in the shape of kindly affections and benevolent sympathies, can shed even over the dullest

pathway much radiant beauty, and cause to spring up in its course many sweet and fragrant flowers.

After some five or six years spent as we have already mentioned, the lady with whom she resided gave up her establishment, and Maude then determined to seek a livelihood as morning or occasional governess to young children. For two or three years she succeeded very tolerably, but at the end of that time her pupils one by one began to fall off, the parents of some requiring for them accomplishments which she was unable to impart, while others either removed from the neighbourhood, or were placed under different instruction. Week after week she vainly strove to obtain fresh ones, and at length her little stock of savings was exhausted. Through a friend of her late mother's, a situation in a large linen-draper's was offered her. She could not starve, and caring at the time very little what became of her, she at once accepted it.

The Lathams were the only relations she had, or at least the only ones she knew. Sometimes she wished that even they had been strangers to her. Once it had been different, but since they had lived in a large house, kept a carriage and several servants, Maude had seen but too plainly, each time she paid them a visit, that the welcome she received had become less and less cordial. It is true, she was now and then invited to spend a week at the Rook's-nest, but it was generally when there was something to do, in which her help was required—never when company was expected, or callers likely to abound.

The conversation which took place, on her arrival in the present instance, between herself and Miss Jemima,

need not be recorded; suffice to say that, in less than half an hour after she had entered the door, she was again wending her way through the lime-tree avenue which led to the house, her heart swelling with a mixture of feelings which it would be alike difficult and useless to describe.

"Hated house!" said she to herself, as the white gate swung behind her; "never again will I enter those doors! I will beg my bread; I will starve first. And yet these creatures call themselves Christians! and next Sunday, kneeling by the side of their fine friends, to whom, no doubt, they appear everything that is lovely and amiable, they will say with all self-complacency, 'From pride, vain glory, and hypocrisy, from hardness of heart, good Lord deliver us.' But they may be repaid yet," she continued half aloud, "for does not the Bible itself say that 'Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall?'"

The sisters were putting the finishing touches to their toilette. "Poor Maude!" said Eliza, as she sprinkled some delicious scent on her cambric handkerchief, "I dare say she felt sadly annoyed."

"Well, it is of no use to talk about it," said Jemima; "such things must occur sometimes, and I do think that under the circumstances I managed the matter very cleverly."

"Not a doubt of it, my dear sister," said Eliza; "and I am sure I feel most grateful to you for taking the affair entirely into your own hands. Had it been left to me, she might have stayed here for a month, before I could have found sufficient courage to tell her in words that she was not wanted. Really, Jemima, how well

you look!" she continued; "those flowers give your dress so much style, and blue always suits your complexion so admirably."

"Well, I think it does," said Jemima, glancing with no small degree of satisfaction at her tall figure reflected in the cheval glass on the other side of the room. "That, you see, is the worst of Maude; one would not so much mind introducing her if she were a stylish, fashionable girl, and had something to say for herself; but really she is such a little plain, pokey thing, and her manners so awkward, that any one may see in a moment (and I am sure the Wilsons would) that she has never been used to good society. She is not vulgar certainly, and that is the best thing that can be said of her."

And were these Maude Crosby's worst defects? If so, they were defects for which she herself could not be deemed responsible, and Jemima, therefore, showed an equal want both of Christian feeling and womanly tenderness in thus taxing her with them. But were they her worst defects? From what we have already said of her character, the reader will at once answer, No. No, for in the words of the poet,—

"There is a beauty for the spirit; mind in its perfect flowering,
Fragrant, expanded into soul, full of love, and blessed."

And this beauty, far more precious and lasting than outward charms, Maude had never sought to possess. From a long habit of discontent, and of looking always on the dark side both of persons and things, she had at last settled down into a sort of morose indifference, and come to regard herself as an injured person, neglected

and slighted by all, though without any fault of her own. She made up her mind that it was the fate of some people to be admired and beloved; of others, to be neglected and disliked; and taking the latter as her own, sullenly resolved to bear it as best she might. And yet Maude's parents were sincere Christians, and had carefully trained their child in the principles which they themselves professed and practised.

Was it, then, indeed her fate to live so unloved and solitary as she did? Surely not, not more than it is the fate of thousands, who are centres of blessing and happiness to the little circles in which they move; or of thousands more who, like Maude, live on, some even to hoary hairs, unloving and unloved, constantly murmuring at the unkindness and neglect of others, never seeking a remedy by pursuing a different line of conduct themselves. The true state of Maude's case was this: she never sought, by those thousand little ways and means, too trivial to mention, but yet so precious in the aggregate, to make herself beloved and valued by those among whom she passed her every-day life. She did not think it worth while. If people liked her, it was all very well; if they did not, it was no fault of hers; she could not make them do so against their will. The result was that very few *did* like her.

At the time she was a morning governess, there were no exclamations of delight, no sunny smiles, no twining of soft arms round her neck, when she entered the room to give her daily instruction. Was she unkind to the children? Oh no—simply indifferent. She would not on any account have troubled herself, as she went along in the morning, to gather a nosegay of wild

flowers, or to make a daisy chain to please them ; they could do it for themselves, if they liked. One day, one of the little girls was in great trouble about dressing her doll ; she did not know how to cut out the frock ; did Miss Crosby know ? Oh yes, but Miss Crosby had no time—she was always busy in the evening ; Emma must find out how to cut it herself. This was only one instance in a hundred ; and so it came to pass that the children were always glad when the hour struck for Miss Crosby's departure, and Maude walked home to her solitary lodging, wondering what was the reason that the children made such a fuss with their rough Yorkshire nurse, calling her "Dear nursy," and yet cared so little for her. Children were disagreeable little things ; she had always thought so—now she was sure of it. It had been just the same in Miss Grover's school ; they liked every body else that taught them, but they never liked her.

It was much the same thing over again when she entered upon her duties in Mr. Sharpe's shop. She was still the injured person—injured in being compelled to adopt an occupation which was distasteful to her, and in being expected to perform precisely the same duties as others in the same position. Several of her companions were amiable girls, who would gladly have exchanged with her those many little offices of kindness and friendship, which so much lighten the tedium of daily toil, and lend some touches of brightness, however minute, to the dull routine of a life such as hers. But she was unchanged, and the consequence was that before very long they came to regard her as a cold heartless creature, and so left her standing alone and

solitary, wrapped in the cold grey mantle of gloomy discontent which she had woven for herself, and which she was every day drawing more and more closely around her.

The Wilsons' visit to the Rook's-nest passed off apparently much to the satisfaction of all parties. Mrs. and the Misses Wilson expressed themselves delighted with the pleasure they had enjoyed, and with the elegant hospitality of which they had been partakers. The Lathams, in the simplicity of their hearts, really supposed that they meant what they said; none of the family having happened to overhear the conversation which passed between Mrs. Wilson and her daughters on the night previous to their departure, when each and all, with sovereign contempt, descended on the different incidents of their visit. Nothing escaped them, neither Mr. Latham's bad English, nor Mrs. Latham's unfortunate attempts at French, not to mention a hundred and one criticisms on house, furniture, carriage, garden, and everything else connected with the establishment.

The fact was, the Wilsons prided themselves in no small degree on the old aristocratic families from which they were descended, and consequently regarded all people, who like the Lathams had risen in the world, as still many steps beneath *them* on the ladder of society. Their visit had been one of policy, not of friendship. Mr. Wilson had business transactions in which Mr. Latham might be of great service to him, could he but secure his hearty aid and cooperation, and had therefore urged his wife and daughters to accept the invitation, as a likely means of securing and strengthening his views.

The Lathams, with abundance of property, had but little connexion—at least, not among people of higher standing than themselves ; and though betraying neither in their appearance, manners, nor style of living, any of that vulgar ostentation which is occasionally displayed by those who have once held a lower position in life, they nevertheless appeared to anything but advantage, when mixing with those whose birthright it was to enjoy that deference and respect from others to which they had of late begun to aspire. They were not what are commonly called gay people, and they were not religious people ; they were something between the two. They did not go frequently to balls and theatres, but they frittered away their lives in doing things which came to nothing in the end. They went to church twice on Sundays, they subscribed to public charities, and occasionally gave away something in private ; but they looked upon their wealth, time, and other advantages, as their own, not as talents lent to them but for a season, and for which they must at last give an account, and thus they made use of them only as seemed right in their own eyes.

About twelve months passed away, and Maude received an intimation from Mr. Sharpe, that at the end of a month her services would be no longer required. He found no fault with her, and said that he should be happy to furnish her with a good recommendation ; but there was one point on which Mr. Sharpe's eye was always kept steadily fixed,—that point was how to get the most money. He had watched Maude from the first, and had not failed to observe, that though no complaint was ever made of any want of civility or

politeness in her, yet somehow she managed to dispose of fewer goods than any other young person in his employment. He took much credit to himself for having, in consideration of her friendless state, put up with this for so long ; and now, having accidentally met with a young person admirably suited to succeed her, considered himself fully justified, after proper notice to enable her to procure another situation, in dismissing Maude.

During the twelve months she had received more than one letter from her rich relations. The first had arrived in the autumn, about three months after her last unfortunate visit ; it was from Eliza, and contained an invitation for her to come as soon as she could be spared, and spend a week with them. Eliza had always written more kindly than Jemima ; and though Maude tossed the letter into the fire, with the exclamation, "Yes, something to be done, no doubt—dresses to be turned, or bonnets to be made up; that is how they like to save shillings, and then spend pounds in extravagance. Yes, they would like to have the poor cousin now ; but I am not going to oblige them for once." Her conscience gave her two or three twinges, telling her not to judge so harshly, for that the letter was written in a kindly strain, and that there ran throughout it something very like a vein of apology, and a desire to make up for past unkindness.

In the course of the winter came two more letters, but they met with the same treatment as the first, so firmly was she resolved to keep to her determination of entirely cutting herself off from all future communication with the family. If she could not support herself,

she would go to the workhouse ; but never would she ask *them* for help. Doubtless there were faults on both sides. The Lathams, in their desire to reach that point in the scale of society just above them, and to be thought of more importance than they really were, had more than once, as we have seen in the present instance, behaved with real unkindness to Maude ; nevertheless they were not—some members of the family at least—without their good points ; and had Maude evinced a more grateful and contented disposition, they would still have continued to show her many little kindnesses, which, if received as gracious gifts from the hand of that heavenly Father, who appointed her the portion either of joy or sorrow which his wisdom saw best, would in no small measure have assisted in lightening the burden which she was called upon to bear.

But Maude was too proud for this ; she could see no reason why they should be rich and she poor ; her origin was as good as theirs—quite. If they did not think her their equal, *she* did ; and if they did not choose to acknowledge her as such, she would have nothing more to do with them. The loss was clearly her own, but that did not signify.

For many months she heard nothing more of them. At length the last day of her labours in Mr. Sharpe's shop had arrived ; she was to leave in the evening, and not having heard of another situation to suit her, had engaged a humble lodging, where she intended to remain until she could meet with a fresh engagement.

It was one of those days of pouring rain not uncommon during the month of July. Scarcely any

customers had entered throughout the morning, and Maude had therefore been spared to complete her packing; but when the dinner-hour arrived, she was called down to take charge of the shop while the other young people went in to dinner. For a quarter of an hour no one came in, and she stood at the window, looking out between yards of lace and piles of ribbon, with a heart full as dreary as the scene on which she gazed. Presently the door opened and an elderly woman entered. Maude took her station behind the counter, and proceeded in silence to serve her with the articles for which she inquired; but the good woman was of a more sociable disposition, and after a good deal of small talk, principally to herself, respecting her purchases, informed Maude that she thought it was a very miserable day.

"Yes, and you seem very wet too," said Maude, who could not help noticing her dripping garments and umbrella.

"A wonder if I shouldn't be," was the reply. "I have come all the way from E—— this morning, and have been walking in and out everywhere, to see if I could find anybody that would go and help nurse a family that is ill with the scarlet fever, but I can't find nobody. You don't know of a nurse, maybe?"

"No, I do not," replied Maude; "people are not generally very fond of going into fever, if they can help it. What family is it? I know something of E——."

"It's the Lathams, that live at the Rook's-nest. Who'd have thought of such a thing? Mighty grand people, you know—keep a carriage, and all. It shows, you see, that God Almighty don't make any difference

between rich and poor. You have heard of the Lathams, then, maybe?"

"Yes, I have," said Maude, and a strange, cold feeling came over her as she spoke.

"Well," continued the customer, "it was Miss Jemima, the eldest daughter, that was taken bad first—a fine, handsome young lady, as you'd see anywhere; and now Miss Eliza and two of the others have got it. They sent the three little ones away, as soon as they found out what it was. But that isn't the worst," she added, lowering her voice; "they do say—but you needn't mention it to any one—that Mr. Latham has been speculating, and lost pretty nigh all his money, and that everything will have to be sold off; but I can't say whether it is true or not—the servants aint discharged at present."

"Do they not know how they took the infection?" said Maude, not noticing the latter part of the communication, though her heart beat hard within her as she spoke.

"Not rightly," answered the woman; "her mamma thinks that Miss Jemima caught it somehow or other in London, when she was staying there a while ago, for she wasn't well when she came home; but whether it was so or not, I am sure I can't say."

"Do you work for the family?" said Maude, as she returned with a packet of tapes for her customer's inspection.

"Why, no, not regularly," said the woman; "only a day or so, now and then; but mistress sent for me when this trouble came on, and so I have been there constantly the last week. I would stay longer willingly,

In the evening, Maude took her leave of the house which had been her home for the last eighteen months, carrying with her but few and faint regrets, leaving behind her none to mourn her absence, or to feel that it caused a void which other and newer faces would fail to make up.

At night she sat alone in her solitary lodging. "Yes," said she, half aloud, "the Bible speaks truly; pride has indeed gone before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. I remember thinking of those very words as I came out of the gate, that last dreadful time I was there. Where are their fine friends, I wonder, now that health and fortune have deserted them? The poor cousin would be welcome enough now, no doubt, but I'll not go to them; I'll not even write

to them,—not I, indeed ! Let them reap the reward of their own deeds, for richly they deserve it ! ” Maude, Maude ! were *you* not at the house of God on Sunday, and did you not with lip, at least, more than once join in the petition, “ Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ? ”

We have said before that Maude had been religiously educated. From her childhood, she had been accustomed to read a portion of the Scriptures every night, before retiring to rest. It was growing late, and she felt very tired ; she unlocked her carpet-bag, and taking out her Bible, opened it at the place in which she had put the mark the night before. It was the seventh chapter of Acts. “ It is too long a chapter for me to-night,” thought she ; “ I will read a psalm ; ” but ere she turned over the leaves, her eye unintentionally fell upon the last verse—“ *And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* ” She read the psalm, but still these words rang in her ears ; she kneeled down to pray, but still they were uppermost in her mind ; she lay down to sleep, and with a mighty effort strove to change the current of her thoughts ; but no, it kept on, and on, still flowing in the same channel : conscience claimed that silent hour for her own, and none should usurp her sovereignty.

“ How different are you to Stephen ! ” said the monitor within ; “ he prayed for his enemies, though they were his murderers ; while you, although you do not like to acknowledge it, are actually rejoicing in the downfall of those whom you only look upon as your enemies, without knowing them to be so.” Then her thoughts dwelt on the spotless life, the matchless tenderness of

that Divine Sufferer, who even in his great and bitter agony cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"—on Him who has left "us an example that we should follow his steps," who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously." Was *she* following this example? Tears of penitence bedewed her pillow, and before she slept, many resolutions of amendment were formed.

Morning came, bringing with it a letter from a lady whose children she had formerly taught, and to whom she had written in the hope that she might be able to recommend her some more pupils, that thus she might be able to resume her first occupation. The lady offered her the situation of nursery-governess in her own family for the next twelve months, at the end of which time, as she should no longer require her services, she hoped to be able to procure her something more advantageous. Alas! for the good resolutions of the night before, they passed away as the morning cloud and the early dew. Whatever her duty might have been, in case of no situation having offered, it was impossible for her to feel any doubt on the subject *now*; she certainly had a right to think of herself before she thought of any one else, especially of people who had treated her so contemptuously. She sat down immediately and wrote a reply, then hastened out to carry it to the post.

The post-office was at some distance, and before she had half reached it, rain began to fall in large heavy drops. In her haste, she had forgotten her umbrella, and was therefore obliged to take shelter under a gate-

way. There are some moments in our lives when we seem to think more rapidly than at other times ; and it was astonishing what time and space Maude's mind travelled over, during the first five minutes that she stood beneath the gateway. She was a little child, learning her prayers at her mother's knee ; she was a young girl, weeping beside that dear mother's dying bed ; a year later, and she was standing by a fond father's open grave ; next, she was the solitary half-boarder in a large school-room, where hers seemed the only sad heart ; then the half-paid under-teacher ; then she was at the Rook's-nest, gazing upon, almost envying, the blessings and happiness which seemed to abound there. The Rook's-nest !—no, her thoughts could not move from that scene, *now* how changed ! In a few weeks it would probably be more changed still. But suddenly the chain of thought was rudely snapped asunder by an old woman, who pushed herself, umbrella and all, under the gateway, with the evident intention of sharing with her its shelter until the rain should cease.

Maude did not begin to think again, but stood as people often do when they are sheltering from the rain, looking vacantly at the passing objects, and wondering when the shower would be over. Presently she saw coming along the pathway a ragged boy, carrying in his hand a short thick stick, and soon noticed that he was followed by a dog. The creature did something which offended him, and she saw him give the poor animal a cruel and violent blow. Moaning piteously, he crept aside for a minute or two, and then followed his master at a distance, limping and

evidently still suffering pain. Maude was very fond of animals, and was so indignant at the boy's cruelty that she felt the tears ready to start into her eyes. He was walking along the edge of the pavement, and just as he arrived opposite to the spot where she was standing, he somehow missed his footing and fell into the road, cutting his ankle severely against one of the rough stones with which some paviers were mending the street. She saw the blood gush out. The boy sat down and roared lustily, as if imploring the help and pity of the passers-by, but no one took any notice of him.

"It serves you just right," said a man, "for knocking your poor dog so."

"I'll take care I do nought for you," said the old woman at the apple-stall, close by; "bad boy that you are to your poor sick mother."

But the dog did not stand aloof; Maude could not help noticing him. The instant he saw his master's trouble, he seemed at once and entirely to forget his own wrongs and sufferings; he ran up to him, fondled over him, and attempted to lick the wound; but as it still continued to bleed, he ran to the old apple-woman, and whined at her feet as if entreating her help. She, however, took no notice of him, except to throw down a bit of stale gingerbread, which he refused to pick up. He then ran off, pausing only at the spot where Maude stood, as if uncertain whether or not to ask for her aid also; but by this time the boy had so far recovered from the first acute pain caused by the blow, as to have bound an old handkerchief round his ankle. He soon stood ready to proceed on his way,

which the dog no sooner perceived than he gave a joyful bark, and bounded after him, evidently with the greatest satisfaction.

"That poor dumb thing might be an example to us in some things, mightn't it?" said the old woman under the arch, turning to Maude. "Well, I can't wait any longer for the rain; so good morning," she added, and unfurling her umbrella went on her way.

"God," says one of our greatest modern divines, "often acts through means, often without means, and sometimes in spite of and against means." In Maude Crosby's case, it was his will to act by very small means, even by the little incident we have just recorded. She stood full a quarter of an hour after the old lady had departed. She knew not who she was, or whence she came; but the few simple words she had uttered came home with thrilling effect to a heart already strangely stirred by the scene she had witnessed. Her midnight thoughts came back with double force. No words were breathed from her lips, but deep from within her soul arose the cry of the broken and contrite heart, which God doth not despise —the earnest appeal for grace and guidance, which never yet was made in vain. That short quarter of an hour had been to her as half a lifetime; she left the gateway a different being to the one she had been when she sought its shelter. Then her heart had been wrapped in the cold deadly fog of her own selfish wishes and desires; but this had cleared away, and warm and bright there glowed, even in its innermost recesses, the pure lovely light of true and Christian charity, even that charity which "suffereth long and is kind,"

which "seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

Maude felt that what she had to do must be done at once, and looking at the letter in her hand, she tore it in pieces, and turned down the opposite street to the one which led to the post-office. She walked on quickly until she came to a chemist's shop, opened the door, and went in. The chemist knew her quite well; "Good morning," said he, "what may you require?"

"I really do not know, Mr. Watson," replied Maude; "I am going into a house where there is scarlet fever. Will you be kind enough to let me have something, if there be anything, which may prevent infection, and to tell me what precautions I must use?"

"Not until you have told me what you are going to do so mad a thing for, as to go into a house with scarlet fever in it," said the chemist, who was a mild, benevolent-looking old man.

"I cannot tell you," said Maude, "any more than that they are my relations, and need my help. I am going to nurse them,—don't attempt to dissuade me," she added, "I must go."

"You look more fit to be nursed yourself," said the chemist, smiling, as he surveyed her slender form and thin, pale countenance; "but, there, I will not say a word, for I see you will not thank me if I do;" and after some further conversation, and receiving some medicines and various directions, Maude left the shop.

It was with a beating heart that she found herself, about two hours after, standing alone in the handsomely furnished drawing-room at the Rook's-nest. A vase of faded flowers stood on one of the tables, some of the

shutters were closed, and the room had a damp cellar-like smell, which made its atmosphere feel more like that of a cavern than of any place above ground. Maude felt a chill creep over her. "Could Jemima be already dead?" The five minutes which she waited seemed an hour. Mrs. Latham entered, looking so haggard and sorrow-stricken, that Maude almost started at seeing her.

"Maude," said she, in a voice the very tones of which seemed altered, "you have not heard what is the matter. Do not come near me," she added, as she saw Maude approaching, "you must go away instantly; no one will come near us—they have got the scarlet fever, my children—four of them—Jemima"—and she sank down on a sofa, and burst into a fit of almost hysterical weeping."

"Dear aunt," said Maude—in her childhood she had called her aunt,—"dear aunt, I know it all; I have come to help you nurse them. Do let me stay! do forgive me!" and she threw her arms round Mrs. Latham's neck, mingling her tears with hers.

"Maude, Maude, we do not deserve this, indeed we do not; we have been very unkind to you, we—"

"Don't say any more, aunt; let us go upstairs. Give me one more kiss;" and Maude felt almost as though she had gained another mother.

"Which room will you go to?" said Mrs. Latham, as they ascended the stairs, after a short conversation with the doctor in an adjoining room. "This is Eliza's."

"Let me go to Jemima," said Maude firmly; "the doctor says that she requires the closest watching, and

I am quite fresh—I shall not want to sleep for a long time."

For many days and nights the poor girl's life hung as by a single thread, and Maude never left her. She was seldom sensible for more than a few moments at a time. At length the crisis of the fever approached. During the day, the doctor had been in and out many times. Not long after his last visit in the evening, the poor sufferer, who had been wildly delirious all day, fell into an uneasy doze, which after a time subsided into a quiet sleep. Maude slipped out of the room to beg that no one might be allowed to enter, nor the least noise be made. After two hours' watching, she saw a slight movement of the bedclothes; she bent over the bed. Jemima's eyes were fixed full upon her, her lips moved, but no other ear than one so almost painfully acute as Maude's had become, could have caught the low faint sounds which issued from them.

"Maude," said she, "I know it all—can you—forgive—" and she attempted to raise her feeble arm and draw Maude down to her, but it fell weak and powerless on the bed. Maude stooped lower, and imprinted a long loving kiss on the pallid cheek.

"Dear Jemima, do not speak," she said; "we all need forgiveness." She raised herself, but the large dark eyes were closed, and a ghastly pallor was spreading itself over the features. Maude had never been with a person in fever before, but she had sometimes heard of fever patients being lost through extreme exhaustion: she caught up a glass of port wine, which some one had poured out for her in the course of the evening, but which she had felt far too anxious to take, and raising

Jemima, held it to her lips, then hastily pouring out another, made her swallow that also. Then she rang the bell violently. In ten minutes, the doctor was again in the room. Mrs. Latham told him what Maude had done. He was a laconic sort of man.—“ You have saved her life,” said he to Maude, as he left the room. Jemima again slept. Maude knelt down, and thanked God for all his goodness to them both.

* * * *

Maude no longer lived solitary and unloved ; she learned that riches, beauty and accomplishments, are but as poverty itself, compared to the wealth of a loving heart, of a spirit filled with universal and Christian benevolence ; she learned, too, the truth of those words of the apostle whom Jesus loved—“ He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen ? ” The lesson was one which she never forgot, but which spread its holy and benign influence through the whole of her after-life. Wherever she went, Maude Crosby was sure to find a welcome, sure to draw around her fresh cords of friendship and esteem. No longer fancying the little world in which she moved to be peopled with her enemies, she found by degrees that it was the habitation of many dear friends ; but, most of all, was she beloved and honoured in the house at the Rook’s-nest,—most of all was her presence there hailed with delight, welcomed joyously as the song of the nightingale in spring-time, and as the warm beams of the summer sun.

Jemima—was she the same as ever ? Did that sick-room exercise no chastening and purifying influence

upon her? Oh! yes, she too learned there many a precious lesson; she learned, when her immortal spirit stood, as she thought, on the brink of an awful eternity, the utter vanity of all that the world calls great and precious; she felt that neither wealth, nor beauty, nor talent could avail her then. But she did not stop there, and it was Maude's high privilege, all unworthy as she felt herself of it, to assist in leading her, through the teaching of the Divine Spirit, to that Saviour whose righteousness could alone furnish her with a white and spotless garment in which to approach the throne of the Eternal.

Nor did the impressions made in sickness pass off, as is too often the case, with returning health. Religion was to her no longer as an outer garment, to be put on and off at pleasure; it became the inner and abiding principle of her daily life, entering into, sanctifying, and elevating all her daily employments and pursuits, making them meet for the Master's use, and enabling her to consecrate her superior talents and mental endowments to Him whose gifts they were.

The rumour respecting Mr. Latham's failure was incorrect; they still lived in the same comfort as formerly. But the influence of Jemima's actions and example gradually spread through the household; and instead of being noted for aiming incessantly to win a higher position in society, and for endeavouring to outshine their neighbours, the family at the Rook's-nest came, in after years, to enjoy the higher honour of being distinguished by the zeal and energy with which they endeavoured to forward every good work and sought

to increase the happiness of those among whom they dwelt, by the liberality with which they expended their wealth in encouraging every fresh plan for promoting either the spiritual or temporal good of their fellow-creatures, and last but not least, for their earnest and constant endeavours to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.

S. M. F.

THE SABBATH EVE.

SABBATH hours ! they come and go
Like the summer streamlet's flow,
Bringing to the waste relief,
Beautiful, but oh ! too brief ;
Sparkling in the golden ray,
Iris-colour'd, then away.
Yet fertility is seen
Fresher where the stream hath been.

Sabbath hours ! ye come between,
Like an islet's emerald green,
Rising o'er life's stormy sea,
Where its wearied ones may flee :
Catching, from its tide-wash'd strand,
Visions of their father-land,
Till they deem the soft winds come,
Breathing melodies from home.

May the Sabbath ever be
Harbinger of good to me !
Calling up my soul from earth,
Fixing it on things of worth.
Swiftly do its sunbeams fly
O'er this changing wintry sky ;
And, in heaven's sabbatic bowers,
I shall praise Thee for these hours.

ANON.



AFRICAN FLOWERS.

ONE of the beauties which Solomon particularizes in the earlier period of the year, along with "the singing of birds," is the appearance of "flowers on the earth." In whatever way these objects of vegetable life are contemplated, whether in their forms, structure, distribution, colours, or uses, the variety presented may well arouse the attention of even the least curious observer. In some lands the study of flowers may be pursued nearly all the year. Not so in other parts of the earth; for instance, in Africa it is only in spring, when the rain has refreshed the ground, that plants come forth into life, and deck the wilderness as with innumerable gems. The whole scene is then as one large flower garden. But on the approach of the dry season, the whole verdure is destroyed, and only a few flowers are to be found around the half-dried pools and fountains.

The progress of discovery has added to our botanical knowledge, and enlarged our stock of African flowers. A bouquet from this quarter of the world we present in our engraving.

SUPERB AMARYLLIS, or *Amaryllis rittata*, is a beautiful flower from the Cape of Good Hope; beyond the tropics, in Africa, it is very extensively diffused. The

corolla of this large, splendid, and pendant flower is cream-coloured, commonly striped with red and yellow; though the tints of the different species vary from pure white to dark purple, and the markings are sometimes waved, or zigzag lines, or dotted with stars. With all its splendour, however, it possesses deadly narcotic properties. A juice is obtained from the bulbs and the blossoms, into which the Hottentots dip the points of their spears, in order to render them fatally venomous.

The *STREPTANTHERA* is another Cape flower, introduced into England about thirty years since. The flowers are of a dark orange colour, its leaves are sword-shaped, and its stem grows eight or ten inches above the ground.

IPOMEA HORSFALLIAE was brought from Africa in 1833. The funnel-shaped corolla is of a brilliant dark rose colour, though there are others of a purple, scarlet, and fleshy tint.

The *CINERARIA* is so called from the soft white down on the surface of the leaves, resembling wood ashes (*cineres*). The flowers are small, and of a darkish purple colour. A large species was some time since introduced from Cape Horn, called *C. gigantea*. That in our engraving is from the Cape of Good Hope, from which place numerous other kinds have been scattered throughout Europe.

The *BLUE PYCONOSTACHYS* (*Pyconostachys caerulea*) is from the island of Madagascar. Its small bright blue flowers are grouped in a dense terminal spike. The leaves are long, lanceolate, and depressed.

Our last specimen is the *GELANDRA*, or Helmet Flower. The lip is white, marked by pinkish longi-

tudinal lines, while the lower part of the cup is yellowish green. This plant is also found in America, near the banks of the Rio Negro.

As we gaze on these illustrations of choice flowers from many lands, who can refrain from adopting the words of the poet :—

“ Ours is a lovely world: how fair
Thy beauties even on earth appear!
The seasons in their courses fall,
And bring successive joys: the sea,
The earth, the sky, are full of thee,
Benignant, glorious Lord of all!”

DREAMING AND DOING.

"GRACE, dear, will you take charge of baby this afternoon? for nurse has gone out with the children for a long walk, Susan has a holiday, and Martha is too busy to mind him. I have just had a note to say that Aunt Lucy is very poorly, and particularly wishes to see me, so I must run on there directly, or else I would not have troubled you, love, for I know you are in a hurry to get your work finished."

Grace was silent. She could not refuse, and she was too much annoyed to speak pleasantly; so she did what she generally did under such circumstances—she held her tongue. Grace rarely expressed her dislike to things that were inevitable; she had a good deal of natural as well as acquired self-control; and she began to fold up her work with a calmness which you might have mistaken for willingness. Her mother, however, saw plainly enough that the task was not an agreeable one, and she was sorry to request its fulfilment; but as there was no one besides Grace to take care of the child, she was obliged to leave him with her. She therefore took no notice of her daughter's quiet but evident dissatisfaction with the proposal;

but after thanking her, and expressing a hope that baby would be in one of his good-humoured moods, she went in haste to put on her bonnet and shawl.

Grace laid aside her work, took a book in her hand, and walked slowly upstairs. She was not at any time partial to the society of little master Robert, and just now his company was peculiarly unwelcome; for Grace had settled herself comfortably to work without any intention of moving for the next hour or two, and afterwards she meant to call on her friend, Millicent Grey, that she might lend her the book which she had been reading, and tell Millicent the thoughts of which it had been suggestive. And now her walk was doubtful, and her quietude unexpectedly interrupted! It was natural that Grace should feel disappointed. Not that it was of any material consequence whether her work were done to-day or to-morrow, or that Grace was really fond of plying the busy needle; she only liked it as a means to an end, and that end was pleasant reveries, or romantic anticipations. It was one of her self-indulgences to sit alone and dream bright dreams of the future; to build fairy castles in the air, which vanished one after the other; and to draw imaginary sketches of herself, when placed in imaginary circumstances, so flattering and so unreal that no one else could have recognised her identity. And this was the chief reason why Grace was generally so willing to help with the plain needlework, because her hands could be busy without her thoughts being hindered.

She had been too well brought up to feel easy, as some do, in sitting with folded hands by the cheerful fireside or on the luxurious sofa; but then she took it for granted

that if her fingers were well employed, that was enough. It did not signify what her mind was about, or how her affections were engaged; so long as she did not waste her time, she was at full liberty to waste her thoughts. And this habit of mental dreaming became, like all other habits, each day more confirmed and strengthened. The people she met with, the books she read, the scenes she passed through—all helped to form a basis for the erection of her airy superstructures; and her showy fabrics, however they might differ in their external appearance, were framed for the same object, namely, to augment the imaginary happiness, renown, or merit of the youthful architect. And so used was Grace to these pleasant musings, that it appeared to her as if she could not do without them. And yet they had a very injurious effect upon her character. They unfitted her for the real activities of life, and made her often discontented and impatient; and her visions of future usefulness blinded her eyes to the neglect of present opportunities, or at least seemed a sort of compensation for it. She was always going to do a great deal, she never actually *did* it; and thus she frittered away her precious moments in idle dreams, instead of consecrating them to vigorous work. When the summons came to her, as it comes to all of us, “Go, work to-day in my vineyard,” her prompt reply was, “I go, sir,” but *she went not*. Are there none whose eyes now rest on these pages, who, like Grace, are satisfied with dreaming when they ought to be up and doing?

In the morning of the day on which we have introduced her to the notice of our readers, Grace had been reading a deeply-touching and highly-interesting

memoir of a missionary's wife. Her sympathies had been powerfully excited by its perusal; and the contemplation of so noble and self-sacrificing a life had awakened in her mind the earnest wish that her own might in some degree resemble it. Grace felt as if she too were ready to give up home, and friends, and comforts, that she might cross the deep wide sea, and share in such hallowed labours. And then, as she bent over her monotonous hemming, she began to picture herself as enduring all the toils and privations of a missionary life, with a patience that never faltered, a courage that never declined, and an energy that had never been surpassed. What a rapid and unpleasant descent it was from this elevated position to be the unwilling nurse of a fretful and troublesome baby! At all events, Grace found it so; and the "patience" which was to have shone so brightly in a heathen land, was sadly wanting in the nursery that afternoon. She was so hasty and cross with her little brother, that he, in his turn, became equally irritable, and gave illustrations of temper which were anything but entertaining. In the midst of a passionate scream, there was a double knock at the door, and poor Grace had the fresh discomfort of anticipating the reception and entertainment of visitors. Happily, she was spared this trial; for instead of Martha coming to call her down stairs for that purpose, another and a lighter step was heard running up, and the next minute, Millicent Grey, with her bright, smiling face, entered the room. Grace's brow cleared directly, and even baby condescended to stop crying.

"Oh, I am so glad you are come!" exclaimed Grace, "for I am all alone : you can stay with me, can you not?"

"Yes, if you will have me. So baby is too small to be counted, is he?"

Grace smiled. "He is not too small to be excessively tiresome; I am quite tired out with him."

"Then give him to me, and I will try my skill: I dare say I can charm him into a good humour."

Millicent was not a stranger, and baby not only readily went to her, but graciously allowed her to realize her expectations by growing very quiet, and being very easily amused. Millicent danced him about, sang, and talked to him, and finally settled him in her lap with a tiny bunch of keys, a thimble, and a little silver scent-box which she produced from her pocket. Order being thus restored, Grace seated herself close by Millicent on the sofa, and they had one of their nice, cozy, and confidential conversations. Grace produced her now favourite volume, and gave Millicent a brief but attractive outline of its contents; and then went on to unfold to her the almost serious intentions which she had formed of being some day a missionary herself. "Some day," was about as definite a period as Grace ever fixed upon in her schemes.

And did Millicent disapprove of the idea, or attempt to laugh it away? Oh no, she liked it extremely, and enlarged upon it with even more enthusiasm than Grace had done; for Millicent was also one of the dreamers. You have not inferred so, perhaps, from the gay abruptness of her manner, and the merriness of her tones; yet she preferred the ideal to the practical, and lived too much in a little world of her own. Grace and she had woven together many fair and richly coloured plans for the future; and had spent many

hours in the glowing anticipations of coming joys and coming duties. And what had they done? That question must not be asked, for there is nothing to tell.

There they sat, that warm sunny afternoon—one so bright and animated, the other so gentle and loving—dreaming still their pleasant and romantic dreams. We will not censure them too harshly, for were not we once as thoughtless and as indolent? and it may be that they will learn ere long the stern but needful lesson, that life is the period of toil, not of slumber; that “it is the seed-field of time, from which the reapers shall gather in their harvest for eternity.”

Some restless movements on the part of master Robert presently interrupted their remarks; and when he was again quieted, an allusion to a new work which was then in the course of publication turned their conversation into another channel; and Grace added, in an arch tone, “And when is *your* book coming out, Millie?”

Millicent believed that she had a talent for writing stories—and so she had; and she had long declared her determination of composing and giving to the world a simple but striking domestic tale, which should develop some most important truths, and delineate some bright Christian graces. It was to make a great sensation, and to effect a great deal of good; and it was to this promised production that Grace referred.

“Oh, it is getting on,” said Millicent, gravely; “there is half of the preface written, and the titles of the first two chapters.”

Both girls laughed.

"But I really do mean," continued Millicent, "to set to work in good earnest as soon as I have time, and finish it,—it is *begun*, you see, Grace; and papa,—oh, that reminds me that I have forgotten to tell you, Grace, that Dr. Sinclair hinted this morning the desirableness of papa's spending a few months abroad for the perfect recovery of his health. And if he should go, of course mamma and I must be with him; and it would be so delightful! all but the leaving you, Gracie—I should not like *that*."

And Grace said, she certainly should not like it.

"But it is only talked of yet, and hardly that," said Millicent.

However, it was a sufficient foundation for fresh imaginings; and the two friends found it as easy to dream about the scenes of other lands as of those in their own; but, in the midst of their golden anticipations, Grace suddenly exclaimed, in a playful tone, "Oh, Millicent, your book! what will become of that if you go abroad?"

"Become of it? why it will be ready for printing when I return. It will be a nice occupation for me to write it, when I am out of the way of my old employments. I cannot always be sight-seeing, you know; besides, I should not think it right to spend all my time in pleasure-taking; I must try and do something useful, something that will benefit other people."

In this pleasant and girlish chat the afternoon wore away; and Grace felt sorry when nurse returned with the tired but noisy children, for the elder ones insisted upon being with her and Millicent. They all liked Millicent, she was so lively and cheerful-tempered, and

had such pleasant stories to tell them. Millicent was naturally fond of children, and she had no brothers or sisters of her own, so that their society was more of a novelty to her than it was to her friend ; besides, there is less difficulty in amusing little people once now and then, than in bearing and forbearing with them day after day, and week after week. So they all got on very well together, until their mother returned ; and then Grace enjoyed a quiet walk with Millicent to her home.

Not many more such walks were the two girls destined to have that summer-time. For the health of Millicent's father declined so gradually yet so surely, that the physician strongly advised his immediate removal to a more favoured climate ; and within a few weeks after the preceding incidents, Millicent had embarked with her parents on the mighty ocean, and Grace was in her own room, thinking over their sad farewell with pensive feelings. Little, however, did either of them surmise how changed would be life's aspect when they met again.

Grace felt Millicent's absence very much, for she was her oldest and dearest friend. Now that she was away, Grace had no one to whom she could speak freely ; certainly, no one with whom she could dream pleasantly. But she did not on that account give up dreaming ; it would have been better for her if she had. Ah, it required another and a different touch to the slight pressure of a passing grief to arouse Grace from her selfish slumbers.

Millicent was a good letter-writer, and her welcome communications cheered and interested Grace. Such

in which she stated that she was continually gathering fresh ideas for it, and that as soon as she felt herself a little more at home in a strange country, the ideas were to be transmitted to paper. Thus enriched, her forthcoming book would be likely to gain a wider influence than it would otherwise have done! No wonder that under the softer air, and amidst the soothing breezes of that delightful land, Millicent was still a dreamer.

Several weeks passed in Grace's home, without the occurrence of any more important event than the arrival of her nineteenth birthday. Congratulations, gifts, and visitors marked the festive occasion, and left but little time or inclination for serious thought. But the next morning a slight headache, which obliged Grace to be quiet, furnished her with leisure for reflection; and instead of feeling disposed to dream about the future, she seemed impelled to glance at the past. She was unusually grave and meditative that morning. Perhaps it was the remembrance of Millicent's absence; perhaps it was the regretful perception of the flight of time; perhaps it was the influence of those heart-stirring sermons to which she had listened on the previous Sunday; perhaps,—nay, we doubt not that it was the

carnest and loving voice of the Holy Spirit, calling her to the service of her Maker, which had hushed for awhile all other claims, and drawn her to the consideration of her rightful duty. Grace hastily reviewed her past life. What an unprofitable waste! what an idle dream! what a selfish, useless, aimless existence hers had been! The retrospect pained and humbled her, and the thought of God's disapprobation added to her own increased her sadness. What could she do to satisfy conscience, and to relieve her disquietude?

Grace had been what is termed religiously brought up, and she was in the constant habit of reading the Bible, and of frequenting God's house. And what was the conclusion to which she came? Why, that if she worked very hard for the future, and endeavoured to serve God faithfully, he would then, in consideration of Christ's atonement and her own repentance and reformation, forgive her former sins and shortcomings. She would not, perhaps, have said this in so many words, but it was her real and sincere belief; and there is reason to apprehend that it is the belief of thousands who profess and call themselves Christians.

Grace was at all events honest in her purpose of amendment. Instead of living for herself, she resolved to live for the good of others and the glory of God; instead of encrvating dreams, her life should be full of noble deeds.

But Grace found in the new path which she had marked out for herself greater and graver obstacles than she had counted upon. It was so very hard to keep on in a continued course of self-denial; to do things which she disliked, and to give up her own

preferences for the sake of pleasing somebody else ; to be sweet and even-tempered with the children when they were trying and unreasonable, and to struggle against her own depressed or irritated feelings. And it was very difficult, too, for one so accustomed as she had been to a desultory mode of life, to persevere in the studies and other occupations which she had fixed upon for the better employment of her time. "Doing" was not so easy as "dreaming." Grace did not make much progress ; indeed, sometimes she stood quite still, and gave all up in despair ; then, when conscience would not let her rest longer, she made another listless effort to go on again. It was a toilsome and wearisome undertaking ; and Grace never knew before how naturally selfish she was, nor yet how imperfect and impure were her fairest actions and motives. She became increasingly dissatisfied with herself, and more and more afraid that she should never be able to please and serve God. She wondered whether she could ever be a Christian.

One Sunday, after a week of increased toils and failures, Grace went to the house of God. A stranger, who had come for a short time during the absence of the regular minister, occupied the pulpit that morning ; and his sermon was a clear, simple, and earnest setting forth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That gospel won Grace's confidence, dispelled her difficulties, and banished her fears. She saw that a full and free salvation had been provided in the Saviour, and that she had nothing to do but, just as she was, to take it at his hands. No payment or preparation was required from her, but she was to come at once to Christ, trusting. Grace

believed this, and she was happy ; her mind was lightened of its burden ; and she was ready to walk through life with an elastic and joyous footstep.

And now how altered seemed her distasteful round of imposed duties ! The reason was, that they were put in their right place ; they were to be the offerings of gratitude, not the extortions of fear ; not the purchase of God's love, but the proof of her own. Oh, what a difference this makes in everything ! How it sweetens labour, and ennobles work !

From this happy period Grace's dreams were exchanged for realities. Her life was too precious to be wasted in idle musings and discontented aspirations. She had an object before her worthy of her most ardent and concentrated efforts ; and a motive-power within her able to surmount all difficulties, and urge her ever onwards. She was eager to work now ; she felt as if she could never do enough.

And there is plenty of work in this world of ours for those who are willing to undertake it. No one need sit with folded hands, because there are too many labourers already in the field. Each one's services are wanted, nor can they be lawfully withheld.

But "home" is the centre, although it is not to be the circumference, of our labours. It must be our starting-point ; we must begin there, if we would begin rightly, and go on safely.

Grace happily recognised this important principle, and strove to act in accordance with it ; and she found no lack of opportunities for usefulness within the quiet range of her family circle. Her position there, as the eldest child and the eldest daughter, gave her an

influence over her brothers and sisters, which was strengthened by the considerable difference existing between her age and theirs. Her parents had lost several of their children in succession; so that Helen, the next now to Grace, had scarcely entered her twelfth year, and there were four younger than her. But Grace had never done much for them, nor taken a very lively interest in their welfare. She had occasionally helped to make and alter their dresses, for she was very clever with her needle, and that was all her easy-tempered and indulgent mother required from her; and she sometimes had a merry game of play with them, or went out with them for a walk; but in general, she was engaged with her own friends and pursuits, and looked upon "the children" as a kind of necessary troubles. But now Grace saw that she might, if she chose, be of much service to them; for her mother not being strong in health, nor yet of a very energetic disposition, took but little pains in training them, and left them chiefly to the care of "nurse."

So Grace entered with a brave but not very sanguine spirit upon her new mission. She feared it would be a long time before she should make any permanent impression upon her heedless and spoilt little charge, especially as she did not consider herself "cut out," as Millicent called it, for the management of children. But Grace made a discovery. She found, to her great surprise, that she was really fond of children; it was a pleasure to her to instruct them; she felt such an interest in watching the development of their characters, and in studying their varied dispositions.

Grace was certainly agreeably disappointed in *her*

expectations ; she got on so nicely with her little brothers and sisters ; they were so much more inclined to mind what she said to them than she thought they would be ; and they began to look up to her with confidence and respect ; even the wilful little Robert grew more tractable. There were, of course, difficulties to contend with, and vexations to bear. The work was pleasant, but it was also arduous. It was *real work*, and it required patience, and strength, and perseverance. You may dream about constructing a railroad, and it may seem very easily done ; the way is cut as if by magic, and the rails are laid down without your moving a finger, in less than five minutes : but it would be a very different affair if you were actually to make a railroad. Yes, there is no comparison between dreaming and doing ; but then there is no comparison either between the *results*. When the dream is ended, all is ended ; there is nothing left but a blank ; but when the deed is finished, mankind are benefited, and the workman is entitled to his reward. And cheered by the hope of success, and by the sweet consciousness that she was well employed, Grace worked on. Sometimes hers was uphill work, sometimes it was underground work ; to-day she had to secure a passage through rock-like feelings, to-morrow she had to try and clear away some rough and unpleasant prominences. But love nerved her arm, and guided her efforts, and "charity never faileth," but "beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and this was the secret of Grace's stedfastness. And the sunshine of love never rests in vain upon childish hearts, or indeed upon any hearts ; it has a softening, gladdening, invigorating, fructifying influence.

The children manifestly improved; everybody said so, and in this instance everybody was right; and earnestly and winningly did Grace strive to lead her young brothers and sisters to that Saviour who had already gained her own affections. Grace was a home missionary.

Summer departed with its flowers, and autumn came laden with its fruits. The earth was still full of richness and beauty, and Grace read in it a type of her own fair lot. A happy home, loving friends, bright prospects, and a peaceful conscience,—was not all this enough, and more than enough, to make her thankful? “My cup runneth over!” was the joyful exclamation of her heart; “what shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?”

It was with feelings such as these that Grace stood one evening watching a glorious sunset from the half-opened window. She was not at home then; she was staying for two or three weeks, for change of air, with some kind friends who resided in the country. As she gazed with rapt admiration on the beautifully tinted sky, a servant brought in a letter for her. It was a letter from her mother, and Grace eagerly tore off the envelope. Ah, there was no need of haste—the contents would too soon be known.

The colour rapidly faded from Grace’s cheek as she read that letter; and when she laid it down, she covered her face with her hands, as if by shutting it out from her sight she could shut it out from her thoughts; the tidings which it had borne to her were so painful and unexpected; for they told her that her father was a ruined man, and that immediate poverty and privation awaited them. They must leave their pleasant home

for a humbler dwelling, and seek for some fresh means of subsistence. And even then, Grace's mother said, or rather wrote, she did not know how they were all to live ; she hardly dared to think of the future—it looked so dark and gloomy ; and yet it must be thought of and planned for.

But what had originated this sudden misfortune ? Grace's father had lately embarked in a very promising but unwise speculation, and he had also become security for a friend to a very large amount. His speculation failed, and so did his friend : and the honest earnings of years were thus swallowed up in a moment. All he had, and more than that, was claimed.

At first, Grace was stunned and bewildered by the unlooked-for intelligence, but as she gradually realized its truth, her hope and courage alike gave way, and she wept like a child that refuses to be comforted. And in some respects, and especially in her freedom from wearing anxieties and troubles, Grace was still but a child. She had been brought up in ease and indulgence ; her reasonable desires had been gratified ; her wishes often anticipated ; and her little troubles had generally been of her own making or her own fancying ; and to young persons thus educated, real trouble comes with more force and terribleness, than to those who have been inured from infancy to difficulties and disappointments. It was, therefore, no wonder that Grace was sad and almost broken-hearted as she thought of the prospect before them. It was not only, nor indeed chiefly, for herself that she grieved ; there was her delicate and not strong-minded mother, her proud and sensitive father, and her helpless little

brothers and sisters to share in her solitude and sorrow; and Grace's tears fell faster and faster. It was some comfort that she was alone, and could give full vent to her feelings.

But presently Grace grew calmer, for she lifted up her heart in prayer; and who ever sought for strength from above, and found it denied? Like a wearied and weeping child that nestles itself in its mother's bosom, and forgets its griefs in her tender embrace, Grace reposed her troubled spirit in the soothing and stedfast love of her heavenly Father; and that peace which the world can neither give nor take away, shed its tranquilizing influence over her, and she softly murmured to herself, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," Ps. xlvi. 1. He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. xiii. 5); therefore, at "what time I am afraid, I will trust in him," Ps. xlvi. 1.

Then Grace read her mother's letter over again, and the concluding remarks, which she had scarcely noticed before, now helped to cheer her. They ran thus: "Come to us, dear Grace, as soon as you can, for it will be such a comfort to me to have you with me. Your poor father is so busy and harassed, that I can say but little to him; and the children—happily for them—are too young to be much concerned about our loss; but you are so thoughtful, dear Grace, and have taken such an interest lately in home affairs, that I feel you will be quite a help to me just now; and I sadly want some one to consult, for my head aches incessantly, and I seem incapable of forming a right judgment about anything. I quite long to see you, my dear child."

Grace's features brightened considerably as she folded up her letter; it was so pleasant to feel that her mother really wanted her, and that she could be of some use at this trying period. To all, and especially to the young, the assurance that others are looking up to us, and are relying upon our advice and our aid, is a most welcome and encouraging reflection; and Grace laid her head down on her pillow with softened but quieted feelings, and she fell asleep with these words in her thoughts, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee," Isa. xxvii. 3.

The next morning Grace bade farewell to her kind and sympathizing friends, and set off on her homeward journey. Her father met her at the railway terminus, and Grace was pained to observe how tired and depressed he looked. He gave her a hasty kiss, but did not, during their short walk, make any allusion to recent circumstances. He was in general a man of very few words, and now he was unusually silent, he seemed lost in anxious thought; but as they drew near the house, he suddenly turned to his daughter, and said quickly but kindly, "You must try and do all you can to comfort your mother, Grace." Ah, Mr. Clifton, it was not necessary to tell Grace *that*.

Grace met with a tearful welcome from her mother, and a noisy one from her brothers and sisters; and in the pleasure of meeting them all once more, she forgot for a few minutes the trouble hanging over them. But an inadvertent remark from one of the children brought it fresh to her remembrance, and she was glad to hurry away to take off her travelling things, that she might

conceal her emotion ; and when she came back, with a serene and even cheerful countenance, no one knew by how strong an effort she had gained the victory over self. Even her mother, as she looked at her, thought, “ What a relief it is to find that Grace bears it so easily ! ” So imperfectly sometimes do the nearest relatives understand each other.

And now, if you please, we will skip over the few weeks which followed Grace’s return ; for it only harrows up one’s feelings to dwell minutely upon distresses which we can neither alleviate nor remove. Oh, there were moments when Grace’s fortitude well-nigh failed her, and when she felt so worn-out that it seemed impossible for her to do anything more ; and yet she bore up bravely amidst all discouragements, for the promise was made good to her as it has been to thousands, “ As thy days, so shall thy strength shall be.”

Grace was now her mother’s helper and comforter. She took upon herself, as much as she could, the arrangement of their little affairs ; and she endeavoured to point out any bright spots which she could discern in the dreary scenery before them. And it is astonishing how much a hopeful glance will discover in the most unpromising circumstances. Above all, Grace earnestly sought to direct her mother to the Source of her own peace and consolation ; and frequent were her petitions for her beloved parents at a throne of grace, that this affliction might be so sanctified to them that they might be led to set their affections on things above ; and might find in Christ that satisfaction which they had never found in the world.

It was on a cold, cheerless day at the close of autumn,

that the Cliftons left their old home for their new one. The new one was many miles distant. It was in a small town where Grace's father had obtained, through the kindness of a friend, a respectable although not very lucrative situation; but they had not a single acquaintance there, so that it wore to them a very forlorn aspect. Grace, however, liked it for one reason, and that was because Mr. Harrison, the minister whose earnest appeals had won her heart to the Saviour, was the clergyman of the neat little church which stood near their new dwelling.

That new dwelling! oh, how poor, and small, and uncomfortable it looked after their late commodious residence! Even Grace felt chilled by its appearance, but she kept her chilliness to herself, and set herself to work, both literally and figuratively, to warm other people; for, with the assistance of the children, she roused up the shabby fire into a blazing one, made the kettle boil for a good strong cup of tea, and ransacked her brain for every subject she could think of, that there might not be any pause in the conversation. It was hard work, certainly, but then Grace did not expect anything else now. And she *would not* see the discomforts, unless they admitted of a remedy, which her mother's experienced eyes so readily detected; and she *would* see the comforts, if it were only in the existence of a convenient closet, or a tight-fitting window, which her mother's tear-dimmed vision so easily overlooked. Capital helps, too, the children were in this particular. When you have a move, it is sure not to be a very dull one if it has any children for its accompaniments; for the charm of novelty is so great

with them, that they invariably like anything fresh, simply because it is fresh. The little Cliftons were no exception to this rule; they were delighted with everything about them, and decided that the new house was preferable to the old one!

"It is not so large as the other," said Helen, "but then it's a great deal more snug." "Yes, and we shall not have to go up so many stairs to the nursery," added Fanny, a restless little creature, who never seemed tired of running about. "And there's such a dear little kitchen!" chimed in Harry, as if it could matter to *him* what the kitchen was. "The garden is very pretty indeed," called out Frank. "It's much smaller than ours," said his mother. "Yes, mamma, but there's a beautiful large field at the bottom." Oh, happy childhood! that *will* look at the bright side of things.

Before they went to bed, Mrs. Clifton was telling them that they would have to do many things for themselves now, because, instead of having three servants, a cook, a housemaid, and a nurse, as they had been accustomed to have, there was only one young girl to help with the work. She spoke as she felt, rather mournfully; when little Harry, who appeared to think that his mother was a little one-sided in her view of the case, looked up with eagerness, and exclaimed, "Well, mamma, but we have got Grace!" He said it with an emphasis which implied—"Is not she worth all the rest? What can we want more?" How happy Grace felt at that moment! especially when her mother looked fondly at her, and then turning to her husband said, "You see, Harry knows how to value

our dear Grace ; " and Mr. Clifton answered in a gentle and loving tone, as he laid his hand on Grace's head, " And so does her father." This was a great deal for him to say, and it amply repaid Grace for past exertions, as well as furnished her with an incentive for renewed ones.

Renewed ones, as you may suppose, were much needed in that new home. The care and education of the children was quite one person's work ; and Grace readily undertook to be that person, so as to leave her mother at liberty to superintend their one little servant. And what with washing, and dressing, and teaching "the five," and making, and mending, and altering their clothes, Grace had as much occupation as she wanted, and sometimes more than she wished for ; for the situation of a nursery governess is not by any means a sinecure. In addition to these duties there were many little things to be done in the house, all requiring time and thought, which seemed somehow to depend upon Grace for their performance. Her hands were full, but then so was her heart ; and a heart full of sympathy and goodwill is the best impetus for getting us through the toils of daily and social life. And Grace, though as busy as she could be from morning till night, was happier, far happier, than when she spent her hours in indolence and selfishness. " Doing," was in every respect superior to " dreaming." It is not meant that Grace was never tired of the one, nor tempted to the other, but that, on the whole, she made steady progress ; and the longer she worked, the better she liked working. It is probable that had Grace's work been self-chosen, it would have been different

work to what it was. She would have fixed upon something grander; she would have desired a more extended sphere; she would have asked for service of a less secular character. But happy are those who are willing to do *their own work*, the work that is appointed them. As good John Newton once observed, "If two angels were to be sent from heaven to earth, one to be prime minister, and the other to be a street-sweeper, each would be satisfied with his own calling, and diligent in the performance of its duties." We are to be ready to work for God, and we are also to be ready to do just the work which he gives us. "And by doing our own work, poor as it may seem to some, we shall better fulfil God's purpose, and more truly glorify his name, than if we were either going out of our sphere to do the work of another, or calling in another into our sphere to do our proper work for us. The low grass-tuft is not the branching elm, nor is it the fragrant rose; but it has a position to occupy, and a work to do, which neither elm nor rose can undertake." *

The winter passed away, and the spring returned; and there was sunshine within as well as without the Cliftons' home; for Grace's smile helped to cheer all within its precincts, and diffused around her an atmosphere of gladness. She was doing her work, and doing it nobly. Her father and mother felt that with such a daughter as Grace, the bitter cup of life was indeed sweetened to them; and they also felt that there must be a reality in that religion which thus evidenced itself in her lovely and self-denying conduct. How many are the parents who have been attracted to the Saviour by

* Rev. Dr. Bonar.

the winning example of their own child! The silent, dew-like influence for good which fell from Grace's words and actions, was strengthened from time to time by the faithful ministrations of their clergyman. Through going occasionally to his Sunday-school, Grace had become personally acquainted with Mr. Harrison, and his kind counsels were of much use to her. And between herself and his only daughter Lucy, a friendship had been formed which was of mutual benefit; and Grace, far away from all early and loved associations, was glad and even thankful to meet with one of her own age whose tastes and sympathies blended with her own.

Had she forgotten Millicent, then, and so soon? No, she had not, neither have we; only as it was Grace's story rather than hers which we had to tell you, we have not felt inclined to break it off before for the purpose of looking after the youthful tourist. But now that we have seen Grace so happily and so usefully circumstanced, we may safely leave her for a while, and ask Millicent what *she* has been doing all this time. Doing! oh, that unfortunate little word! how could we think of linking it with Millicent's name? it certainly has no place yet in her vocabulary, although we are not without hope that it soon may, for it is hardly possible for any one to live long with our earnest-minded, warm-hearted Grace, without catching some portion of her spirit. But does Millicent live with Grace, then? Yes, at all events, for the present.

While poor Grace was resolutely battling with various kinds of difficulty at home, Millicent was abroad, flitting like a butterfly from one flower to another; seeing

much, but learning little, and doing still less. She *meant* to write her book; she *meant* to do good to others; but her intentions were fair blossoms which never bore any fruit. At length a startling dispensation woke Millicent from her dreams. Her father's health was perfectly restored, and they were contemplating their return to England, when her mother was taken from them after only a few hours' illness. In that solemn bereavement, Millicent read a never to be forgotten lesson on the value and uncertainty of life; and she also saw in something of its true character, the frivolity and uselessness of her own past existence. "What am I living for?" was a question which would force itself upon her attention.

Millicent's father, after the death of his wife, shrank from the idea of coming back at once to his desolated home, and he accepted an appointment to travel abroad for two or three years. It was not expedient nor practicable for Millicent to be his companion, and, at her own request and their invitation, it was arranged that she should reside for that period with her old friends the Cliftons.

And there she is now, dear reader; and do you think she could have found a better home? Grace has fresh work to do now; she has to soothe Millicent's grief for the loss of her mother; and to show her dissatisfied friend that there is no real rest to the mind, until we take Christ's yoke upon us, and yield ourselves to his service. And Grace is in nowise reluctant to avail herself of this unexpected opportunity for usefulness, for she loves Millicent dearly.

Look at them both at this quiet evening hour, as

they are sitting by themselves in the pleasant little parlour ; Millicent on the sofa, with a book in her hand which she certainly is not reading, for her eyes are fixed upon Grace, and Grace sitting near the window, stitching some wristbands for her father's shirts.

" Well, Millie," asks Grace playfully, as she threads her needle, " and is your important two-volumed book finished yet ?" Grace would not have put that question, had she known the painful recollections it would awaken.

Millicent looks distressed. " Oh, do not talk about that, Grace—I cannot bear to think of it ! not that my going on with it signified much to other people, for I do not suppose they would have cared to read it ; but it has been like everything else, begun and not finished, or rather, talked off and not done. Oh, how I have wasted my time, Grace, in idle dreams and flattering purposes ! What a selfish, useless life mine has been ! I do not feel as if it could ever be any different."

" Oh yes, it can," Grace replies, earnestly; " that is, if you wish it to be."

" Wish it ! oh, Grace, you do not know what I would give to be like you. But that is impossible. You need not shake your head, for I am sure of it. Since I have been here, I have tried to imitate you a little—only a very little, mind—but it was of no use ; I could not do it, and I have given it up. If I had tried when I was younger, I might have succeeded, perhaps, but now it is too late."

" Ah ! dear Millicent, you have not learned two verses of Scripture which I have had to learn, or you would not talk so."

"What verses?" asks Millicent.

"These," replies Grace; "learned them, I mean, with your *heart*, not with your lips, Millicent,—'Without Me ye can do nothing;' and, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.'"

And then Grace, throwing aside her natural reserve, tells her friend of the changes which have come over her own thoughts and feelings; and also of that peace and happiness which is realized, and only realized, in connexion with the honest and true-hearted determination to be faithful to our personal responsibilities. Nor does she forget to point out to Millicent the gladdening and ennobling motive which stimulates the Christian in the discharge of life's most trivial duties.

Grace speaks with warmth and animation, for she speaks from the heart. Millicent appears deeply interested; and if it were not too dusk now to see, it might be observed that there are tears in her eyes. She makes no comment; indeed, she has hardly time to do so, for Grace is hastily summoned by her mother, and Millicent is left alone. It is perhaps as well, for she seems absorbed in deep and quiet thoughtfulness. The sudden storm of affliction, with its awe-inspiring sounds, has passed by, and now after it has come the still small voice. Will Millicent listen to it? Will she heed the loving call? Will she arouse herself from her dreams and her inactivity; and, strong in her Saviour's might, go forth to do his work, and to do it while it is called to-day?

I do not know—but, reader, will *you*?

THE CLOUD WITH THE BOW, AND THE CLOUD WITHOUT.

“ Yes, dear mother, yes ; I will think of it all by and by ; but now, you see, I am only beginning to live, and why should I get ready to die ? ”

“ The true word says, ‘ Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth ? ’ my son, and we know not the length thereof. Your heart is wedded to the world and its short-lived joys. If death come, you are not ready ; if sorrow and disappointment come, you have no Comforter to lean upon.”

“ Oh mother dear ! dream not of sorrow, when all prosperity smiles upon me.”

“ I have had the reality, my son, so perhaps may you ; and who but the mighty Lord could have borne me through ? I have found him faithful and true, and I would that thou too hadst him for thy dearest friend.”

“ He must be my friend, else I should not have you for my mother,” said the youth, as he gazed upon the sweet pale face of the widow ; “ but I cannot be sad now, nor think just yet about other worlds. If I have not a right to be happy in this, I know not who has, for—read this,” and he spread a letter before her.

The letter which was to prove his title and right to be happy was from the father of his newly-betrothed, consenting to an early union ; and now he was anxious to have speedy preparations made to receive with due honour the future mistress of the settler's home.

" You see, mother," he said, smiling, " you were wrong to say my heart is wedded to the world. It has far loftier tastes, and is wedded, with your own consent, to the gentle Marie Rénan."

" So be it, my son, for your best earthly affections ; but I would have the Lord Jesus your first, best loved, and Marie only second in your heart. In better words, I wish you to 'seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness,' and then to take all the good things his grace may add to you. I should better trust in the duration of your happiness, if Marie came to you straight from the hand of God ; but much I fear you have thought little of his will in the matter."

" If all good gifts come thence, mother, I am one of his most favoured, albeit quite willing to grant that it is for your sake, and not for my own. I am going to give you a daughter to cherish and cheer you, and never fear but we shall all make for heaven together in due time. So now let us think what will be needful here to make things pleasant and handsome for Marie."

And the kind mother gave willing attention to the wishes and plans of the wayward youth, and suggested many improvements in comfort and appearance, which her frugal care had denied to herself, but which would be acceptable to the expected bride. A log hut had been her own bridal home in this great wild West, but a comfortable well-built house now stood on the flourishing estate that the father's hands had cleared, and the best-born maiden in Canada need not have disdained alliance with the prosperous and industrious inheritor of the wealth and good name of Wilhelmbart.

There was, however, but one spot in all the land of much interest now to the widowed mother, and that was where some ten years before she had heard the hope of resurrection-glory spoken over the grave of her husband. She lived to do her Maker's will, and to pray for her only son; and when the time of his marriage drew near, she hoped that her term of life was almost ended. She rejoiced in his happiness, and murmured not that, though hitherto she had been all in all to him, he had now found a more congenial friend for his young warm heart. "And," thought she, "he may soon need a Rebckah to comfort him after his mother's death."

One bright, cold, frosty morning, in the depth of a Canadian winter, when the snow lay deep on the ground, and the high-road through the forest was walled with ice and snow for many a mile, Wilhelmbart's sleigh, newly decorated and trimmed, was brought to his door. He had just surveyed his house for the last time with the utmost complacency, for now it lacked nothing, he thought, that kindness and liberality could supply.

"Now then, mother dear," said he, "farewell for a very short time. You will be ready for us ere night-fall to-morrow. Have bright fires on the hearth, and the mother's own smile on your face to welcome your children home. And, mother," he whispered, as he kissed her, and touched the white muslin border that still tokened her heart's bereavement, "can you, will you for once lay aside this mark of woe, and remind not the bridal hour of an anguish that mocks at all earthly comfort?"

The widow tried to smile through the gathering tears, as she promised to think on his wish.

"God bless you, my son," she said, "and long spare you such woe; but oh, if it ever should come, may your mother's peace and hope be yours! But, Wilhelm, be careful how you drive over the snow; heed well all the landmarks, for the snows may have drifted since the road was last cleared."

"Fear nothing, dear mother; Flectfoot knows every step of the way, for I have taught it him well this winter, you know, and I dare trust life and limb to his sober care. He looks as if he had some inkling of his errand too," added Wilhelm, as he patted the proud neck of his noble horse; then springing into the sleigh, and waving a last adieu, was soon borne out of sight of home.

The widow turned back from watching him to her Bible and her Saviour God, and then to her remaining household preparations, pleasing herself with every little thoughtful attention that could minister to the comfort or pleasure of those she dearly loved. Meanwhile Wilhelmbart dashed through the dreary forest, flew

over the open ground, and arrived a welcome guest at the house of his future father-in-law.

A most comely pair they were, as all congratulating friends declared, when on the following morning Wilhelmbart and his fair young wife stood before her parents to receive their last benediction. The beautiful sleigh and the noble Fleetfoot stood in waiting, and Marie was seated and wrapped in the finest furs that could be bought, her husband scarce allowing himself a sight of the bright eyes that thanked him for his thoughtful care.

"We shall find it cold, Marie, in an hour or two, and you are not used to so dreary a ride; so you must be content to look like a little bear in a den for awhile," said he, laughing, as he drew the last warm cover over the sleigh, and cut short all further farewells by shaking hands with his father-in-law, who blessed them once more; and giving the well-known hint to Fleetfoot, who shook his mane to the tinkle of the little silver bells that here and there decorated his harness, they set off at a gallant pace, with the good wishes of all for the homeward bound.

"We are later than is well in this cold season," said Wilhelmbart, "but still I hope Fleetfoot will make up for it, and carry us home ere nightfall. Are you warm enough, dear Marie?"

"Oh yes, and I delight in this way of travelling; we seem to glide with the speed of a flying star."

"And we shall soon light up our welcome in my mother's face, Marie. My mother is ready to love you as she loves me, and she is so like an angel waiting to rise to another world. It is a marvel that I am not

better than I feel, with her goodness always before me ; but I have promised her that we shall be most teachable children, Marie, and learn her way to the other world."

Marie cheerfully assented, and, by degrees being beguiled of her thoughts of the late leave-takings, the journey progressed in charming style. But time fled faster than they, and the short day began to wane ere the edge of the forest was gained. The air grew keener and colder, and Marie became more silent as she clasped the furs closely around her, and coiled herself down beneath the cover of the sleigh.

" You are cold, dearest," said Wilhelm, observing the movement.

" Yes, very, and a little weary too. Shall we be long now, Wilhelm ? "

A sharp crack of the whip urged Fleetfoot to his best paces ; his hoofs seemed scarcely to strike the ground, and Wilhelm talked earnestly, requiring from his companion a reply to every remark. " We are in the forest now, Marie. Not very long, I hope, for my mother will be getting anxious. You must look up when I see the lights."

The sweet voice of assent had melted away to a drowsy whisper.

" Rouse yourself, my Marie," cried her husband ; " we shall soon be at home—your own new home, my wife. Speak, I beseech you, and do not let sleep overpower you ; it is dangerous sleeping abroad on a night like this."

Marie tried to obey, but again she seemed scarcely to hear the voice that so earnestly sought to arouse her, and again and again did poor Fleetfoot feel the lash of

his usually indulgent master. Wilhelm anxiously drew off his driving glove, and felt the muffled hand of his wife ; it was warm, he thought, and returned his pressure.

" All is well," said he ; " but, Marie, do not yield to this stupor. Move, speak ; we have cleared the forest, but I cannot see you now. Only a little while longer, dearest, and we shall be home." And ever and anon he bent down to listen to the breathing of the weary Marie ; but the anxious throb of his own heart, the murmur of the night-wind, and the quick, sharp sound of the horse's feet, confused his hearing, and the last few miles were passed in an agony of distress and dread.

" Now, Marie, the lights ! the lights !" he exclaimed, in a tone of wild excitement, as the distance rapidly lessened, and Fleetfoot still galloped along. " All is right now, my Marie ; we are at home ! home ! home !" he shouted, as the lights became larger and brighter, and the noble horse dashed up to the door of home, and the watchful mother and all her attendants appeared in an instant.

" You are late, my dear Wilhelm ; but welcome, most welcome, home. Marie, dearest, a new parent welcomes thee here."

" Mother, she is weary ; she could not keep up, for the cold has been severe, and as much as even I could endure ;" and Wilhelmbart lifted his bride from the sleigh, and with a beating heart and a trembling step bore her into the house, his mother following with a pang she could scarcely control.

" Wake her ; oh mother, awake her ! she must awake !

It is nothing but sleep, I say," cried the frantic youth, as he laid her on a couch, and pushed away the enveloping furs, and revealed in the light the calm pale face of the unconscious girl. "Awake, Marie, or you will kill me! I cannot, I will not, bear this! Mother, mother, it is too much, too much;" and poor Wilhelm staggered and fell, as the fearful truth forced itself upon his mind.

It was too true; the blood was frozen in those young veins. Marie had fallen asleep to wake no more, and the close of the bridal day left the widowed mother in deep and sympathizing sorrow, alone with her widowed son. Who can describe his wild despair? His heart was all tumult, and wrath, and misery; there was no spot for the dove to set its foot amidst the raging storm. The idol fell, and the worshipper was crushed beneath the ruin. He who a few hours before thought the world a most pleasant place, and boasted his right to be happy therein, would now have subscribed to the darkest picture that represented it a desert, whose record was only "lamentation, and mourning, and woe."

And what shall we say to these things? "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth," saith the Spirit of the Lord. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them," saith the royal preacher. "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass;" and "the paths of all that forget God" shall perish; "whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he

shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure." "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked : *but* he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about." "Trust in the Lord, and do good." "Delight thyself also in the Lord ; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." The love of God in Christ calls, "My son, give me thine heart." The work of God in Christ presents the magnet, and the Eternal Spirit gives the yielding touch, and pardoning love provides comfort for all that "mourn," as well as salvation for all who, feeling the "sinfulness of sin, lay hold of life by a true faith in Jesus." "They that seek me early shall find me ;" and the heart that yields to the heavenly impress in youthful years shall not need the hammer and chisel to carve it through cherished idolatries in later life.

G.

THE SAINT'S ETERNITY.

"There shall be no night there."—Rev. xxi. 25.

TEN thousand thousand years are gone,
And still 'tis high, eternal noon ;
No clouds nor darkness e'er arise
To veil the brightness of the skies.

No sun is here to rule the day,
Nor stars nor moon with paler ray ;
For light ineffable, divine,
From God the Son and Father shine.

No pain nor sorrow e'er alloy
The raptures of celestial joy,
And guilt and sin for ever flee
The gates of immortality.

Oh, bliss supreme ! Oh, bright abode !
Here all are kings and priests to God ;
Oh, wondrous love ! amazing grace !
Which gave my soul in heaven a place.

And is this state for ever sure ?
Shall bliss from age to age endure ?
Shall ever-bright'ning glories shine ?—
Yes ; God's eternal day is thine.

Shout ! shout his praise, ye ransom'd throng !
And heaven's high arch the theme prolong ;
Strike ! strike aloud your harps of gold !
Redeeming love can ne'er be told.

R. M. H.

